

WORLD TIMES

US Tentacles on the Middle East

Social Justice ✓

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Persecution of Minorities in India ✓

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ON SCREENING TEST FOR CSS

To Screen or not to screen, that's the question!

One thing that has kept the CSS aspirants on tenterhooks for quite some time is the issue of a Screening Test. The ping pong between the federal government and Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) on conducting a screening test prior to written exam for country's most prestigious competitive examination, commonly known as CSS, has taken a heavy toll on prospective aspirants. It created an environment of uncertainty owing to which they dithered and eventually their preparations for the 2020 exam got affected.

The idea to hold a screening test before CSS written exam is not new. Through its Annual Report 2017, the FPSC conveyed to the parliament examiners' demand to hold preliminary screening test. The objectives of this step as mentioned in the report were: to

filter out non-serious candidates, to improve the quality of competition, ensure objectivity in paper assessment, and fast track the entire process of competitive examination with the aim to reduce the timeframe from 18 to 12 months and reduce the financial costs as well. However, the proposal couldn't get government's nod; hence, it was back-burnered. However, when the Imran Khan-led PTI took the reins of the country, it launched a drive to reform the country's civil service. In line with PTI's manifesto, wherein the party vowed to "transform the civil service into a merit-based, de-politicised cadre of professionals," Prime Minister Khan formed a Task Force on Institutional Reforms, headed by Dr Ishrat Hussain, which gave recommendations regarding revamping recruitment, training and promotion criteria of civil servants.

The issue again resurfaced in October, when a news citing Adviser to Prime Minister on Establishment Division Shahzad Arbab appeared in national media according to which Central Superior Services (CSS) aspirants would first undergo a necessary screening test before being permitted to take the competitive examination. Later in November, in an interview with a local daily, Dr Ishrat Hussain unequivocally stated: "... [We are creating a screening test based on the international best practices. Right now, it is very difficult to assess 16,000 scripts from the exam every year. So, we are bringing in MCQs which will help to eliminate a lot of people at the screening stage. As a result, the residual bunch of 2,000 people or so will go through a psychometric test modelled on the British Civil Service. After this round, we will go through compulsory and optional subjects' written exams, and then the interviews. So, more effort would be focused on those candidates who have qualified at the screening test. And by having these specializations, there would be matching of their domain knowledge with the placement in the service."

But, on Dec 22 last year, the federal cabinet turned down a proposal by the Establishment Division for introducing screening test. Although the proposal noted that the existing system does not examine the domain-specific knowledge of the candidates hence the screening test will assess the problem-solving skills and analytic abilities of the aspirants, the cabinet rejected it on the premise that such examining procedures will mar the inclusiveness of the CSS competitive examination since the students from underdeveloped areas, like South Punjab, Interior Sindh, Balochistan and ex-Fata, will struggle to compete in this tough competition. But, given the experience of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, the cabinet's fears seem unwarranted as these countries are already holding screening tests before the main examination. India has the biggest system of recruitment of civil servants and the very first step of this exam is called preliminary examination. For 2019 exam, India's Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) released the results of preliminary examination in July last year according to which 11,845 candidates of more than 0.8 million appeared could qualify to appear in the mains. The chunk of failed candidates included people from all states and all communities. But, there was no hue and cry even in the backward states. Similar is the case with Bangladesh where as many as 20,277 candidates, out of 4,12,532, qualified preliminary tests of the 40th Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS). Again, no hullabaloo or furore from 'underdeveloped' areas!

Although merit and providing equal opportunities to all is important, the importance of the screening test must not be watered down. The federal cabinet needs to review its decision and there are numerous reasons for that.

First, the number of candidates aspiring to take CSS exam has seen a considerable growth over the years. Expansion in the private and public sector has led to increased enrolment, as there were 59 public and private universities in 2001, which has reached 193 in 2019. An analysis of FPSC's annual reports reveals that number growing from 15,998 in 2013 to 39,630 in 2020 (in 2019 the number of 23403)—an increase of a whopping 148 percent, approximately. But, no efforts have been made towards capacity building of FPSC; it has same old infrastructure and system of conducting the examination.

Second, is the issue of low pass percentages; during the last five years the highest pass percentage was seen in 2018 (4.79%) but it saw a steep decline to 2.56% in 2019—average pass percentage during the last five years was 3.14%. The FPSC has to bear the brunt of failure of non-serious candidates who appear only to chance their arm in CSS competitive exam. The proposed screening test would sift the candidates and only having a genuine proclivity for civil service would take the written exam.

A screening test would enable FPSC to perform its duty of recruiting only the best to the country's civil service more efficiently. With this mechanism in place, only the best would go to the main examination and FPSC will have more room to select young men and women who genuinely are the crème de la crème of the country's talented youth.



Adeel Niaz

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UNSC Meeting on Kashmir

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) recently held a meeting to review the situation in the India-occupied Kashmir. Indeed, Modi's aggressive policies and Pakistan's powerful advocacy has made Kashmir once again a matter of international concern; Pakistan must continue presenting the case of Kashmir on every forum. This meeting reflects the seriousness of the regional situation. However, the UNSC must not limit the Kashmir situation to close room deliberations. The fierce urgency of now demands from the UNSC to take some concrete measures against Modi's India, which is undermining the peace and stability of the region. Unable to take actions against Modi's India will mean the UN has failed to perform its principal responsibility: saving the future generations from the scourge of wars. The UNSC's permanent members must let go off their narrow interests for once to stop India from its illegal actions in the vale of Kashmir and heightened aggressiveness against Pakistan. Otherwise, the continued policy of appeasement by the UNSC members will take its toll on humanity.

Dilshad Hussain
Larkana

Indian Army's Political Ambitions

Voices of concern are being raised in India today about the assertion of the Indian army and its political ambitions. Taking advantage of Modi's reliance on the army to quell popular discontent in the Muslim dominated IOK and in other troubled parts of the country rocked by protests against the CAA, Indian army generals consider it an appropriate time to deepen their interference in political matters. The perception about the non-political and neutral position of the Indian military on political issues is however changing with the passage of time. General Rawat's comments "Leaders are not those who lead people in inappropriate directions, as we are witnessing in a large number of university and college students," is just the tip of the iceberg. The more India will be polarised in the wake of Hindu fanaticism and BJP's sustained anti-Muslim policies, the more the Indian army will be politicised. Constitutionally, the Indian Armed Forces are subservient to the government but in reality, in the last several years, one can notice their assertion in areas considered to be purely of civilian domain. Given its size and decentralised structure, it may not be possible for the Indian military to seize power but when the level of political polarisation and violence reach an alarming stage, one can expect the "khaki" to step in and take control. The most dangerous possibility is if the Indian military indoctrinated with the Hindutva ideology relinquishes its status as a national army and transforms as a Hindu military force following the footsteps of Nazism and fascism.

Abdullah bin Aziz
Zafarwal

Letters to the Editor

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India and Kartarpur Corridor

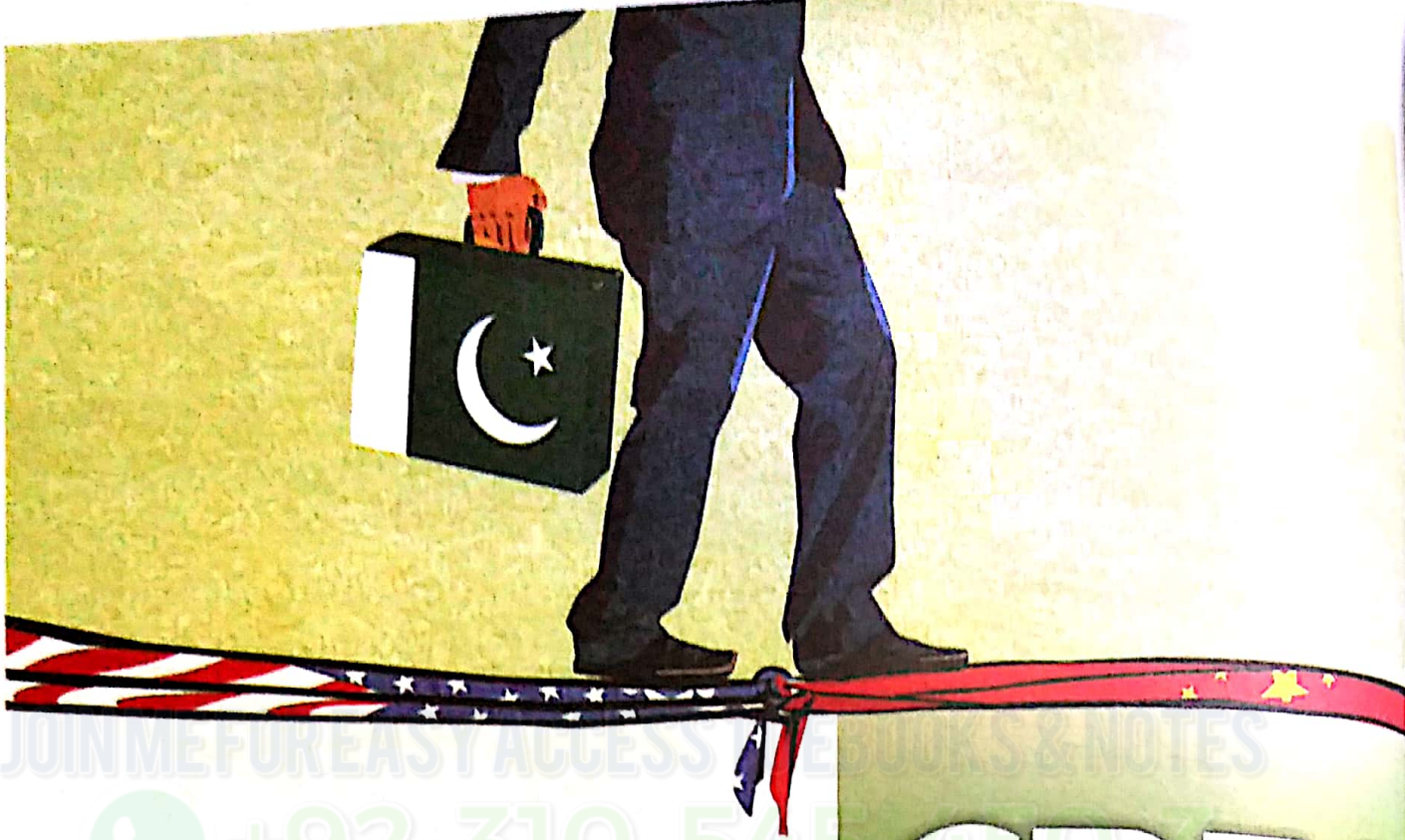
President of Azad Jammu & Kashmir Sardar Masood Khan has reportedly said that the government of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) is seriously considering providing mandatory military training to the youth of AJK, especially the people living along the Line of Control (LoC), as Indian government can go for any misadventure at anytime to divert attention from its internal matters. The AJK President has in fact explained the criticality of the situation following BJP government's August 5 action through which it deprived occupied Jammu & Kashmir of its autonomy and bifurcated the occupied region into two 'states'. India's belligerence against Kashmir has not ended with its August 5 action; it is now mulling attacking Azad Jammu & Kashmir to divert global attention from growing political unrest within itself following passage of a highly controversial citizenship bill by its parliament.

Muhammad Farooq Hasnain
Gujrat

Islamabad Master Plan

Islamabad is an important example of modern urban planning, undertaken shortly after the formation of the new state of Pakistan to serve as its capital city. Islamabad received considerable attention at the time of its conception and its early stages of development. However, according to recent news, the master plan of Islamabad 1960 witnessed 43 significant amendments by successive governments. And in this process, the authorities sought no input from experts. Perhaps, the socioeconomic issues that the city is suffering from are a result of not consulting experts on the changes that the successive governments made. The PTI government approved a revision of the capital's master plan last December that aims to revive the capital's green image, control the mushrooming of unauthorised housing, overcome civic issues such as the water shortage and poor sanitation, and expand the city in a planned manner. A comprehensive revision of Islamabad's master plan to cope with changing requirements and make it relevant to the present needs is urgently required. Given that the government has taken experts on board, it is not wrong to anticipate that the revision will maintain the concept and spirit of the original Master Plan.

Ayeza Fatima
Lahore



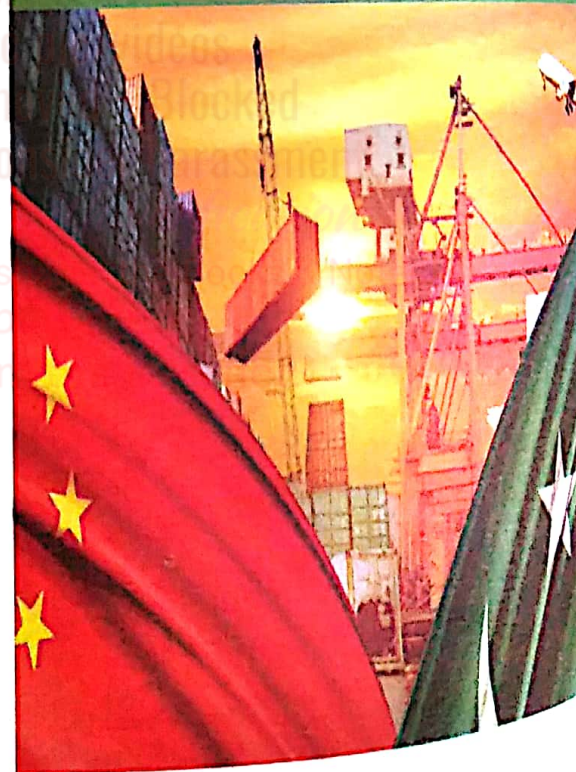
We should be thankful to US Assistant Secretary of State, Alice Wells, for at least showing some concern about Pakistan's interests. She is worried that China is not sincere with Pakistan and its CPEC projects with Pakistan are not an aid but rather a form of loans that ensured guaranteed profits for state-owned Chinese enterprises. According to her, the multibillion-dollar project would take a toll on Pakistan's economy at the time of repayment of the loans. Both China and Pakistan promptly rejected the US claim that CPEC benefits China more than Pakistan. Both defended CPEC as a joint venture of mutual benefit.



Shamshad Ahmad
Chinese Ambassador Yao Jing was more forthright in asserting that Pak-China relations are based on "win-win cooperation" for both, and are mutually beneficial. He expressed astonishment over Wells' statement of higher tariff at power plants established under CPEC. "In 2013, when Chinese companies were establishing power plants in Pakistan," he asked, "why didn't the US come forward and invest in Pakistan's power sector despite knowing that Pakistan was in dire need of electricity." He said China was always there when Pakistan was in need of assistance. Unlike the Western-controlled IMF repayment system, China never asked for repayment of loans on time. All said and done, this verbal feud shows one thing. US Assistant Secretary Alice's statement was nothing but yet

CPEC

LINKAGES OF PEACE & PROSPERITY

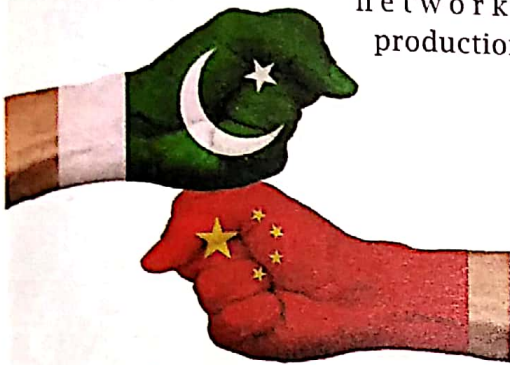


another reflection of the US aversion to the very concept of CPEC. It has always been opposed to CPEC which it views as part of China's expanding global outreach. To understand the reality, one needs to have a clearer understanding of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. It is a \$62 billion, China-funded 'flagship project' within China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is fast heading towards closure of 'early harvest' projects. With five energy projects commissioned and several more on course, these will surely help lift Pakistan's economic output.

The CPEC connects western China with Gwadar port on Pakistan's southern coastline in Balochistan province. Along the Corridor route, the plan envisages connectivity thorough road and rail networks, power production units and

people-to-people contacts. China attaches special importance to having the CPEC project completed in three phases by 2030. Involving only one country, i.e. Pakistan, the CPEC provides China with direct access to the Indian Ocean. The route shortens western China's distance to the Arabian Sea from 13,000 km to just 3,000 and cuts the transit time from 45 days to only 10.

Gwadar port is 400km from the Strait of Hormuz, the critical choke point in the Persian Gulf, through where the bulk of China's energy needs pass. Nearly 80 percent of China's imports pass through Strait of Malacca. Both of these straits make China extremely vulnerable in case tensions flare up around them. The CPEC with Gwadar at its terminal puts China at the doorstep of Hormuz and could eliminate the Malacca route completely. Notwithstanding its grand vision and the speed at which the project has taken off, the CPEC continues to face multiple



Special Economic Zones (SEZs). CPEC, as a flagship of all the BRI corridors, sets the tone for others. President Xi Jinping had announced the BRI plans during his visits to Kazakhstan and Indonesia in 2013. Comprising the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, the two modern versions of the ancient Silk Route were to provide transcontinental connectivity of trade and economy.

At an APEC Partners' Conference in Beijing in October 2014, President Xi Jinping explained his larger connectivity vision, stressing that this initiative will provide multidimensional linkages side by side in five areas: coordination of policies, connection of infrastructures and facilities, trade liberalization, free flow of capital and

challenges.

When the BRI was formally launched in 2017, there were three significant holdovers: India, Japan and the United States.

The US was taken aback when some of its closest allies within NATO and Asia-Pacific rushed to join in. The project, as it is conceived and is being developed, creates shared benefits, and no nation wants to be left out. These three countries are doing so at their own peril. In attempting to preempt the Chinese, and thus the Asian Century, they risk being on the wrong side of history. India, in particular, as an avid objector, sees the BRI initiative, and more specifically the CPEC, as China's attempt to circle India through this connectivity. Gwadar, to Indian policy-makers, is part of the 'string of pearls' ports that China is aiming to control around India.

The 40-year management agreement over Gwadar and the lease for SEZ gives China a toehold into the Indian Ocean. CPEC allows China the possibility of a naval presence

close to India's western coastline, which together with Pakistan's antipathy will become a challenge for India. India also objects to CPEC route that traverses the Gilgit-Baltistan region, part of erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir, contested by India and Pakistan. The Americans have always echoed the Indian viewpoint. Both conveniently forget that under the 1960 World Bank facilitated Indus Waters Treaty, Mangla Dam is located within this contested state and both contributed money for its construction. Why object now?

It's all power politics driven by America's China-driven agenda. Both China and Pakistan, on the other hand, have always denied India's objections, and insist that CPEC is only aimed at expanding the region's linkages of peace and prosperity, and have repeatedly invited India to come on board. CPEC has no geographical boundaries. If anything, it will foster regional harmony and forge closer relations among China, Pakistan and their neighbours with no exclusivity or selectivity. It will directly benefit over 3 billion people in China, South Asia, Central Asia and Middle East. On completion, the CPEC will bring

impediments. On their part, the Chinese have always delivered on their commitment. The problem is on our side. Given its strategic importance and socioeconomic benefits, CPEC should have been managed and implemented by us along the lines we did in the case of our nuclear programme. For unhindered, smooth implementation of CPEC, we in Pakistan needed an independent, high-level autonomous authority to exercise an overarching control of the project in all its aspects, free of bureaucratic and procedural bottlenecks and political encumbrances. It's never too late.

We still can revert to the above special arrangement through a legal policy framework. Our first and foremost



overarching economic and trade connectivity, bilaterally as well as regionally.

For China and Pakistan, CPEC will instil greater vitality and a stronger strategic as well as economic content to their all-weather friendship. For both, this indeed is a huge agenda with mutual interests rooted in their common vision for a better future for their own peoples and for peace and prosperity of the region itself. For China, it is the 'national rejuvenation' through accelerated development of its backward western regions, whereas for Pakistan, it is the imperative of converting its geopolitical location into an asset rather than a liability. The real challenge for both now remains how vigorously and faithfully they can translate this common vision into reality.

Both sides will have to sharpen their implementation machineries, removing bureaucratic and procedural

responsibility is to provide the needed political support and requisite security framework for its smooth, unhindered implementation. In implementing this Corridor, China and Pakistan are not striving to merely leverage geography for economic prosperity; they are trying to build a peaceful, connected and prosperous neighbourhood, and would welcome other countries in the region including India as their partners in CPEC. But India has its own paranoid reasons to oppose the BRI and more specifically the CPEC. It must opt for peace rather than continuing to ride its hegemonic ambitions. ■

The writer is a former foreign secretary.

The past decade has been the most difficult in the history of the European Union. The 1920s could become even more complicated and dangerous. We may be at the beginning of the end of the West as we know it. A new generation of politicians and thinkers must be brought in to put Europe back on the right path of stability and growth; the present one is blinded by the triumphalism of the past 30 years and is incapable of making wise decisions. The EU is overburdened with serious problems, none of which can be solved in the medium term and each weighs so heavily that the EU could be crushed by any of these problems.

M. Ali Jawad

Take Brexit, which the rest of the EU countries were still trying to prevent. The US, on the other hand, supported Brexit, while Washington is planning a free trade area with the UK after Brexit. There is probably also a special military alliance between Washington and London—these two states will try together to make world politics. Germany and France are, therefore, developing their own agenda, and cannot be suppressed by the Anglo-Saxons. The West then splits. The US is Europe's biggest problem. The Americans are in a geopolitical battle with their rivals Russia and China, and the Western allies are being absolutely obeyed. The EU, the Americans demand, should no longer obtain energy from Russia and no longer buy technology from China. The US wants Moscow and Beijing to stop making money in the West for their military build-up. The US thought of democratizing Russia and China; After the attempt failed 20 years ago, Washington is seeking to contain its rivals. Presumably, Europeans will buckle because they are totally dependent on the US market economically. In doing so, the West is pushing Russia further into the arms of China. The new Eurasia is emerging—and the West will later deeply regret not having partnered with it. Instead of seeking to join forces, the EU wants to compete with both countries—in the Middle East, Central Asia, Africa...

The next problem is the ageing of European societies, which can break the overburdened social systems. The pension problem has been a problem for the EU states for decades, and, in the 2020s, it could have

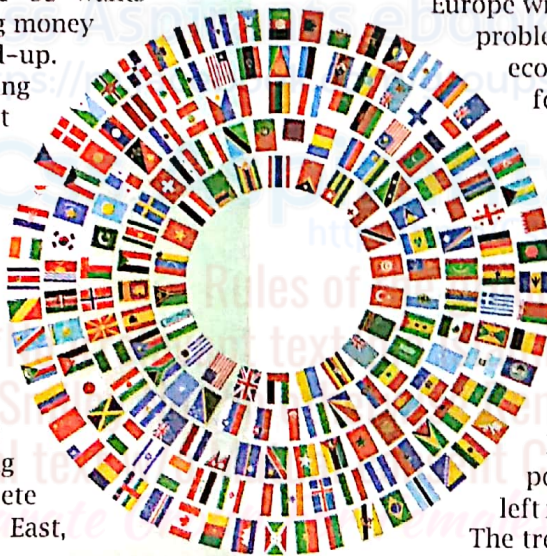
The Trend of World Politics for the

2020s



dramatic consequences if the baby boom generation retires. Another problem is the divergence of the euro zone. The north of Europe is getting richer—the south is getting poorer. There will be no single financial area with a budget, but the populations of Northern and Eastern Europe will rebel against it. Finally, the climate problem. Germany is pushing ahead with an eco-revolution, but few EU states want to follow Berlin. Eastern Europeans are opposed to the rapid decarbonisation of their economies, because they want to secure their prosperity with traditional energies before they adopt the expensive alternative energy sources. The eco-revolution will probably be nipped in the bud, sabotaged by conservative-minded European societies, not to think of the USA, India and China—the world's biggest polluters, who have only a tired smile left for the German eco-revolution.

The trend of world politics for the 2020s is evident. The transatlantic bloc is weakening, but it remains united under American pressure. In Asia, a counter-alliance is developing, in which China and Russia will play the leading role. ■





Righting the wrongs of the past?

After nearly two years' trade talks, the world's two dominant economic powers, the United States and China, have signed an initial trade deal that will roll back some tariffs and boost Chinese purchases of US goods and services. Through the "Phase One" deal, which was signed in Washington on January 15, the

Trump administration aims to resolve some longstanding American concerns about Chinese trade abuses. Although the centrepiece of the deal is a pledge by China to purchase at least an additional \$200 billion worth of US farm products and other goods and services over two years, over a baseline of \$186 billion in purchases in 2017, the accord appears to leave questions about how Washington and Beijing will enforce its terms and prevent further tensions. Some of the commitments contained in the 86-page document, which has eight chapters and a preamble, echo previous pledges made by China at the WTO or in G20 summits, and repackage steps Beijing had already been taking towards more open markets. Cybertheft by China as well as its use of industrial subsidies and its barriers against some US technology investments have not been addressed.

To critics, the scale of China's concessions has not been worth the pain and disruption wrought by the trade war. Many observers were cautious about the outcome.

But the view among members of the Trump administration and those close to the White House is that

M. Bilal Butt

"Together we are righting the wrongs of the past and delivering a future of economic justice and security for American workers, farmers and families."

—US President Donald Trump

On January 15, the United States and China signed what they billed as the first phase of a broader trade pact that includes pledges from Beijing to more than double its purchases from American farmers in the first year. Titled "Economic and Trade Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the People's Republic of China," the deal commits China to do more to crack down on the theft of American technology and corporate secrets by its companies and state entities, while outlining a \$200 billion spending spree to try to close its trade imbalance with the US. It also binds Beijing to avoiding currency manipulation to gain an advantage, and includes an enforcement system to ensure promises are kept. Overall, the deal seems most focussed on arriving at peace in the trade war. Among its requirements is a resumption of the economic dialogues that past administrations have held with China.

they managed to achieve more than previous administrations, and not much less than what they had set out to do when Donald Trump was elected.

Below is a breakdown of the different chapters of the trade agreement and what they say:

Intellectual Property

China agreed to beef up its intellectual property

protections in several ways to make it easier for US companies to seek recourse in both civil and criminal proceedings for the theft of trade secrets, without disclosing confidential business information. The deal also includes stricter measures related to patents, trademarks and geographical indications to prevent piracy and counterfeiting. Although these measures apply to digital infringements, critics say this chapter addresses many "20th century" IP issues with China but fails to tackle the current era's most pressing problem, as China did not make any sweeping commitments to combat cybertheft.

Technology Transfer

China pledged not to force US companies to hand over their technology to its authorities in exchange for access to its market—a commitment it made when it joined the WTO, and then repeatedly violated, according to US officials. In the deal, China said it would not force US companies to hand over technology in M&A and investment transactions when seeking licensing or other administrative approvals.

Food and Agriculture

China agreed to loosen some long-standing barriers to trade in food and agriculture—mostly related to health standards—that had applied to products including infant formula, poultry, beef, pork, rice and pet food. It also makes it easier for US grain producers to obtain biotech-related approvals for genetically modified crops. The relaxing of these barriers should make it easier for US farmers to export more goods to China—which is the subject of another chapter in the agreement.

Financial Services

China has pledged a series of measures to open its financial services sector to US competition, in areas ranging from banking services to credit ratings, electronic payment services, asset management and insurance. The US has also made some reciprocal promises to allow some Chinese financial services to receive non-discriminatory regulatory treatment in the US. This could ease fears that the US-China trade war will lead to a decoupling in capital markets, and ensures Wall Street's support for the deal.

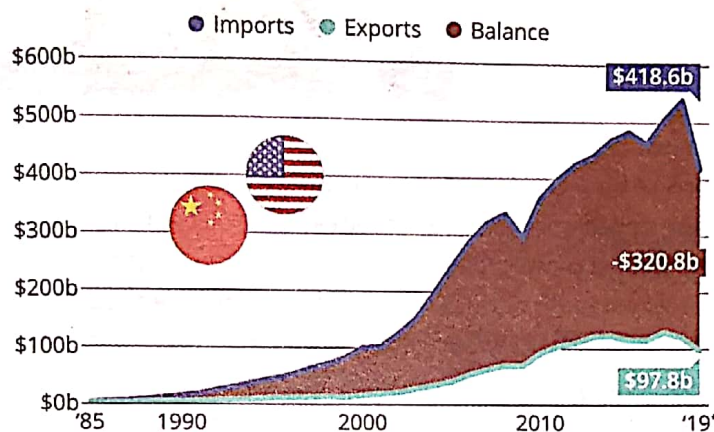
Macroeconomic and Exchange-rate Policies

Both the US and China largely reaffirmed pledges made to the G20 and IMF not to devalue their currencies to benefit their exporters, in order to maintain a market-based



A Longterm View On U.S. Trade With China

U.S. trade in goods with China since 1985



exchange rate, and to publicly disclose their foreign exchange positions.

They specifically noted that any alleged violations of the terms of the deal would be subject to enforcement, which could mean invoking consultations with the IMF or even imposing unilateral tariffs.

Purchases

Given Donald Trump's fixation with reducing the trade deficit, Washington was consistently pushing for China to substantially increase its purchases of US goods and services. In the end, China agreed to buy \$200bn more in US goods than it did in 2017, the baseline before the start of the trade war, over the course of two years.

The two-year total includes \$77.7bn in additional manufacturing purchases, from aircraft to cars, iron and steel to machinery and pharmaceuticals. It also includes \$52.4bn in purchases of energy products, like crude oil and liquefied natural gas, and \$32bn in purchases of farm goods including oilseeds, meats, grains and seafood.

The agreement specified that purchases "will be made at market prices based on commercial considerations" and that "market conditions" would affect the timing, language that sowed doubts in agricultural markets and sent the price of US soyabean down 1.4 percent.

The deal also allocates \$37.9bn for the purchase of services, such as cloud computing, financial services, travel and tourism.

Dispute Settlement

The Trump administration wanted a mechanism to ensure China abided by its commitments. The agreement creates a framework for top officials from both countries to meet regularly to try to address alleged violations. But if the dispute is not resolved after meetings involving China's vice-premier and the US trade representative, either side

Will the Deal Reset Other Stalled Talks?

The phase one trade deal is but a temporary truce that leaves the key issues of the trade dispute unresolved. The pact that President Trump has touted as a step toward creating a fairer and reciprocal partnership still leaves intact nearly three-fourths of punitive tariffs slapped on China since the onset of the trade rift in 2017. Even so, the limited terms the two largest economies agreed upon sets the political stage for further bilateral negotiations and to stem a further deterioration in the global growth scenario. China is to buy \$200-billion in goods and services in the coming two years — purchases in 2017, were valued at some \$187 billion. The proposed increase in exports is believed to be unprecedented in US trade history and caused speculation on the impact these steep targets could have on China's other trading partners. Agricultural exports form the smallest proportion of the latest offers relative to manufactured goods and services. This has been



an important area of concern for the American farming sector ever since China imposed retaliatory tariffs on soybean imports from the US. But Beijing has promised to open its markets in dairy products, poultry, fish and allied sectors. Whereas China has given assurances to remove barriers for American banking, insurance and other financial services, Washington would be more wary of guarantees on IP protection and alleged forced technology transfers; the last two have been among the more contentious aspects of the trade dispute, as seen in the attacks on Chinese telecom manufacturer Huawei. Separately, Washington has invoked provisions on threats to its national security to punish adversaries, an exceptional measure in the international trading arena. Crucially, the timing of the package enables Mr Trump to claim some success in narrowing the trade deficit with China ahead of his November re-election bid.

Mr Trump has said that negotiations on a phase two agreement would begin immediately and even hinted that he could travel to Beijing. However, questions over government control of China's state-owned firms and industrial subsidies—at the core of the bilateral dispute—are not expected to be resolved until after the 2020 US Presidential elections. In parallel is the agreement to revive an erstwhile Obama-era mechanism for economic dialogue that was abandoned under the Trump administration. The step signals hope just as Washington's decision to withdraw the tag of a currency manipulator upon Beijing, accusing it of artificially devaluing the renminbi to gain competitive advantage. The new forum could set the tone to address sensitive issues that have dogged Beijing's relations with the US and its allies after China joined the WTO.

can impose punitive measures, such as tariffs, without a "counter-response," as long as the action was taken in "good faith."

Rolling out this system could be challenging. Although confidentiality is supposed to be guaranteed, US companies might be hesitant to lodge a complaint against Chinese officials that risks reopening the trade war.

Formalities

The last chapter of the trade deal includes formalities such as the deal coming into effect 30 days after it is signed and giving the US and China the right to scuttle the agreement within six days. It also states that Washington and Beijing will agree on the timing of new negotiations—although no time line is given.

US and Chinese officials have said they were ready to begin a second stage of talks, which could lead to further tariff reductions. But there is no clarity on whether any deal will be reached by the November 2020 election—which could see Mr Trump replaced in the White House, or be rewarded by voters with a second four-year

term.

Analysis

China promised a \$200 billion increase in purchases of US goods and services over two years. China's trade surplus with the US is indeed too large. Much of China's foreign currency has been spent on purchasing US treasury bonds. This is not an ideal trade-financial structure in the long run. Moving toward a trade balance is a healthier direction for China-US economic cooperation.

Because of China's enormous trade surplus, the US has used it as a political weapon against China. Expanding the amount of imports from the US is a process to dismantle this weapon. The increase in Chinese imports from the US means that more weapons to counter the US will be held in US hands.

In the past, China imported more than \$20 billion worth of agricultural products from the US in one year. When China suspended purchasing those goods, it exerted great political pressure on the US. When China's purchase of these items reaches over \$40 billion, the US will be further

tied up. China needs to work hard to implement the additional \$200 billion in imports from the US in the next two more years. The US should also cooperate fully to provide products that the Chinese market really needs and are competitive in price. China is already a market economy. Most import companies are private, and many are foreign-funded. The Chinese government cannot give orders to these companies. In addition, consumers will not buy products out of political considerations. The US is clear about all of these facts.

If the US sells its products by force, and the Chinese government buys useless products, then high-quality products from other markets such as Europe, Japan and Southeast Asia are squeezed out of the Chinese market. This would violate the WTO rules.

Therefore, substantially increasing China's imports of US goods can be a greater challenge to the US than to China. If US companies cannot deal with the challenge, US President Donald Trump's negotiating team will not save them. Others are worried that China's economic growth is slowing down. So, where can the country find the market after expanding imports? This is the point which China needs to push itself. As long as it can further expand its

consumer market, with its economy performing in a normal way, it can accommodate these expanded imports. The yuan will likely gain against the dollar in the next two years. This will make it easier for China to expand imports from the US.

The Phase One trade deal is consistent with the general direction of China's reform and opening-up. The deal promotes a China-US trade balance, strengthens intellectual property protection and creates a more favourable environment for external investment, which are the directions that China must stick to during its opening-up process. The trade war is pressure, but China should try to turn it into a driving force to comprehensively deepen its reform and opening-up.



US-China trade war



US China
Main developments

March 2018

Trump announces import tariffs: 25% on steel, 10% on aluminium

Beijing responds with list of 128 products to face 15-25% tariffs if talks fail

July

Start of trade war despite efforts to calm the waters

Dec

Truce

Washington suspends planned tariff hike for 90 days

Beijing pledges to buy American goods

May 2019

US raises duty rates on existing tariffs covering \$200 b to 25% from 10%. The tariffs first took effect Sept 2018

Nov

Trump backs law supporting pro-democracy protestors in Hong Kong

China slaps sanctions on charities based in US

Sept

China complains to World Trade Organisation

New US tariffs take effect

June

Donald Trump and Xi Jinping relaunch negotiations

China raises tariffs on US imports worth \$60 billion

Dec

Truce, preliminary agreement

US scraps new tariffs on Chinese goods

China suspends introduction of tariffs on some US goods

Jan 2020

US removes "currency manipulator" label it imposed on China

China reports trade surplus with US narrowed in 2019

US says expected trade deal has no agreement to reduce tariffs

Signing of "phase one" trade agreement, Jan 15

Some argue that China should have accepted all the US conditions from the very beginning. This is naïve.

During the 22 months of the trade war, China responded to the US attempt to make China give up high-tech development, and made the US understand that China is not the one to be trifled with. Neither the EU nor Japan has the courage and ability to compete with the US. This will increase US expectations that China will fight back when faced with radical US policies against China. China, at such a strategic position, is doomed to face difficulties. It should wisely and firmly deal with the uncertain China-US relations. ☐



Democracy of Inhumanity and We the People of Global Conscience

Dr Mahboob A. Khawaja



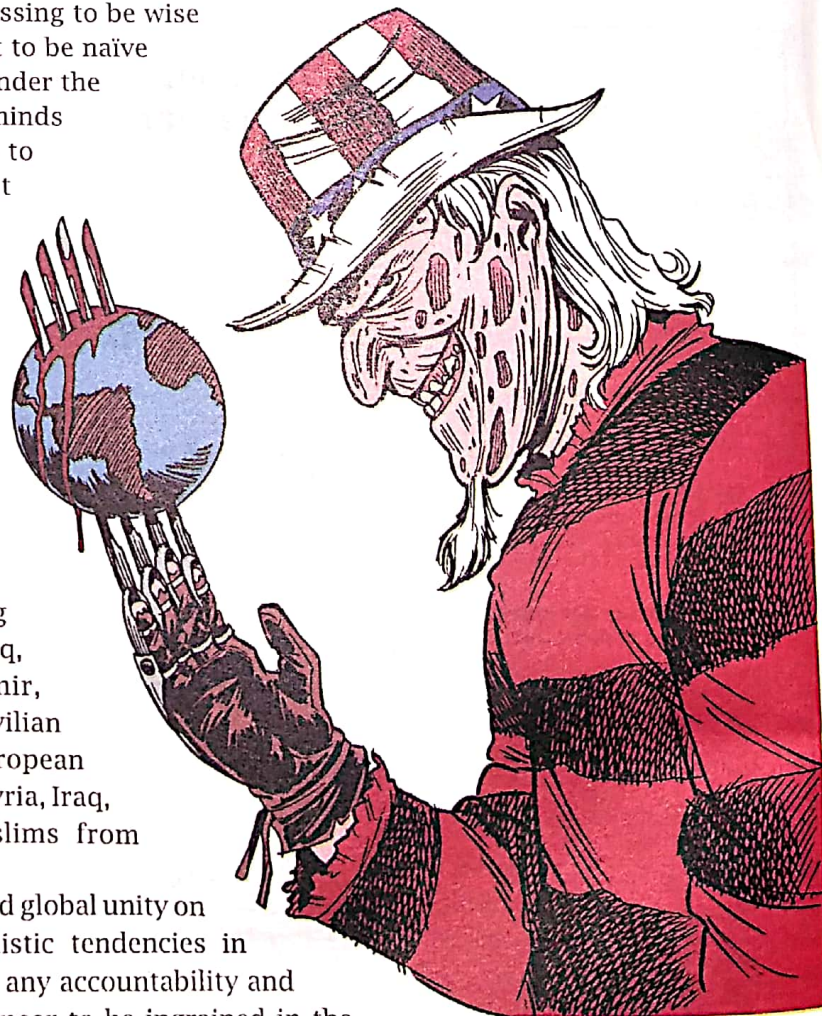
In a synoptic view, global leaders professing to be wise and smart for being elected, turned out to be naïve and egoistically foolish. Once elected under the so-called democracy, they focus their minds on how to get re-elected and how to

continue a tragic normality of abnormality against the masses that elected them. Agreeably, 21st-century's knowledge-based political affairs require true and effective leadership having a comprehensive sense of human rights, dignity and kindness towards fellow human beings, and versatile understanding of navigational change when facts of political life warrant a change. Most contemporary leaders of the world appear to rejoice self-centred evil-mongering, not wisdom and truth of people-oriented political systems of governance. Ideas and ideals that defy reasoning and truth are gushingly operative in aerial bombing of the innocents in Syria, killings of protesters in Iraq, India, Egypt, Chile, Venezuela, Bolivia, Kashmir, Yemen, Libya and not to mention the large-scale civilian displacements of refugees sheltered in Western European nations, Turkey and Lebanon out of bloodbath in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and forcibly-evicted Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar (previously Burma).

The end picture of the 2019 is not peace, harmony and global unity on these critical issues. These trends represent sadistic tendencies in democratic norms and a system of politics without any accountability and remedial action. Fear of the masses and hatred appear to be ingrained in the

"We have let the government's evil-doing, its abuses, power grabs, brutality, meanness, inhumanity, immorality, greed, corruption, debauchery and tyranny go on for too long. We are approaching a reckoning. This is the point, as the poet W. B. Yeats warned, 'when things fall apart and anarchy is loosed upon the world'."

— John W. Whitehead "Monsters with Human Faces: The Tyranny of the Police State Disguised as Law and Order."



mental microscope of many political leaders. All authoritarian leaders lack the imagination of moral and intellectual traits that should have been at the core of effective leadership. Be it the United Nations—the chief organ of global peace and security—or the United States, Russia and other EU nations, the sense of reality is missing in policies and practices. Millions and millions are bombed, charcoaled by chemical attacks, but civilians are unprotected by the Geneva Conventions and the noble intents of the UN Charter. The US Constitution and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, all sound like insult to the "commonsense" and to human intellect and political observations. When phony leaders fail to live up to the standards of morality and civilization, they sink into vindictiveness of insanity, irrational behaviours and create political chaos and problems to keep the masses occupied in naïve politics. Jesus is quoted in the Bible saying: "If the world hates you, you know it hated me before it hated you ... if they persecuted me, they will also persecute you ..." [John 15:18-25]. How do We the People of Human Conscience make these ugly and disingenuous politicians to learn from the history and change the course of events into peace and harmony with the masses all over the globe?

Is the UN meant to protect the mankind from the "scourge of wars"?

Despite the UN and the global institutions of peace and security, We the People, We the Humanity are strangled by well-planned warfare against our existence and survival on this planet. The perversion goes on unchallenged for long in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, Yemen and Kashmir. To discard the indifference and insanity of the global leadership toward human protection and survivability, all concerned global citizens must think to avert the ultimate impending cataclysmic destruction of mankind and the planet Earth. In all wars, mankind is the net victim of cruel acts of few warmongers. The news media plays pivotal role in manufacturing and transforming unspoken myths into thinkable notions in situations of unusual emergencies and societal conflicts. Despite knowledge and advanced intelligence networks, the industrialized nations fail to find workable protective measures from societal upheavals and extremism. Everywhere mankind is victimized by the unknown consequences of the few sadistic egoistic leaders, be it in Syria, Iraq, Bolivia, Kashmir, Chile, Palestine, India, Venezuela, Egypt or elsewhere.

Did the UN or the international community realize the immediacy of the critical humanitarian crisis and daily bloodbath going on in Syria, Iraq, South America, Yemen

and elsewhere? Was that reality transformed into a living consciousness transcending momentarily the self-actualization for collective goodness of global humanity? Living with fear and hatred drains out all rational human thinking for life and whatever values and concepts it claims for human rights, civility and the future. The long shadows of death and destruction of human habitats daily converge on TV screens, showing several thousand displaced refugees moving from nowhere to nowhere. The UN, its Security Council and the global humanity (if there is such a living entity) were supposed to prevent the forcible massacre of the innocent civilians and extend



some sense of concerned humanity to the victims. They do not! So, it becomes a routine of aerial bombardments, deaths and displacement of people. Are We the People, We the Humanity that ignorant that blindfolded not to realize what is happening in our surroundings? Was it not the same historic reality that led to the two World Wars by the few against many?

Ignorance and arrogance are destroying humankind

We the humankind live on One Planet, whether you believe it or not, we are One Humanity. Looking critically at the 21st-century global geopolitical affairs, it appears as if humanity and all the working notions of thinking and actions are at crossroads in search of peace, harmony, security and sustainable future. To imagine a common mathematical orderly manifestation, it is incumbent to have sustainable co-existence and harmonious collaboration between all the converging factors to emulate the end purpose for the good of all humankind.

Few days ago, US President Donald Trump announced to set up a "Space Force"—a galactic force to ensure the American security in space. Has Trump solved all humanitarian problems on Earth? What rational criterion is implied to move the fear and hatred from the Earth to the Space? From planet Earth to the outer space, people

are wired with unknown secretive and sophisticated weapons—the ticking time bombs of scientists and space experts. Man and ignorance continue to intervene and change the nature of things operative within the living universe—why is it that humans cannot co-exist with humans on Earth—the Living Earth?

The UN and the world order—the lost reality of humankind

Since its inception, the United Nations is viewed by the global community as an institution to “protect the mankind from the scourge of war” by evolving and implementing a systematic approach to crisis analysis, conflict prevention and to ensure the security of the global governance and peaceful future for the humanity. Its major organ—the Security Council—is seen as a body of systematic mechanisms to deal with global issues of peace, security and prevention of war while facilitating the necessary framework through diplomacy, laws, procedures and directives based on the UN Charter. Often the members of the Council fail to define their own role and responsibilities toward global humanity. Most often, they disagree with their own perceptions, statements and values during the deliberations.

The survival of the deprived humanity, the United Nations, international peace and harmony are everybody's concern and priority. Throughout the world, the educated and responsible intellectuals must address the question: how to develop a new global institution of functional relevance and credibility? As members of One Global Humanity, we must think how to construct a new world organization accountable to humanity, and not to nation-states? How could the UN be freed from the clutches of so-called superpowers? How can voices of reason and honesty be heard at the forums of international organizations? How 21st-century challenges can be met with innovation, responsible and timely governance and concrete responses to crises across the globe? How can human rights, human dignity, peace and security be assured to concerned humankind? How can humankind—the global community—be represented in all of the participatory deliberations of new global institutions?

Could We the People, and We the Humanity, be optimistic for 2020?

Unless the elite and corrupt systems of so-called democracy change, there is no hope of any formidable political



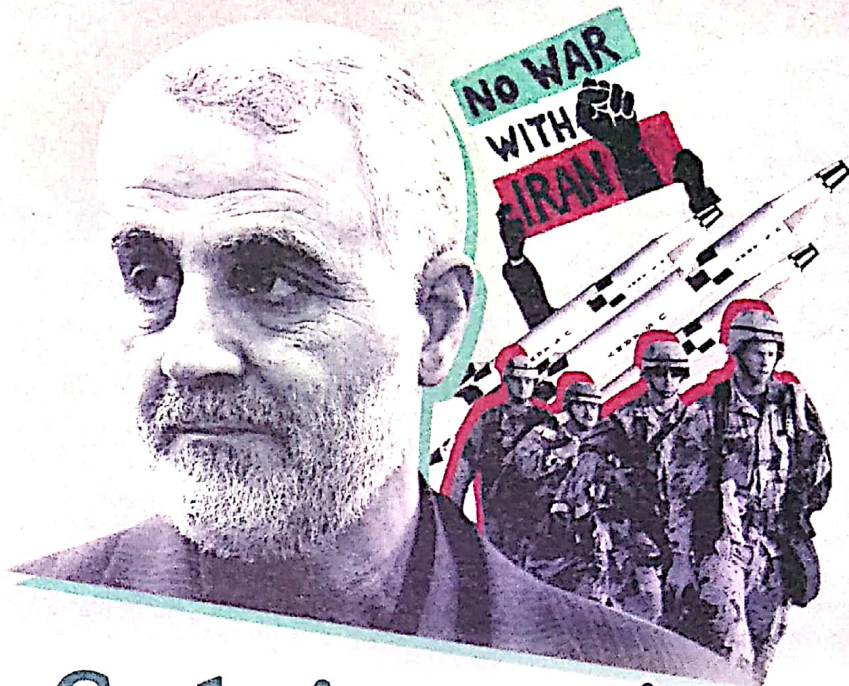
change for the next year. Learning from the unpleasant facts and making changes in perceptions, policies and strategic direction is a rational choice to intelligent leadership. We do need men of new ideas and creative strategies to safeguard the future of mankind from ignorance and arrogance of fellow men. One could propose a workable solution to the bewildered global leadership's mindset if the leaders could be sent on a space voyage to see Planet Earth as is from the above and

try to understand its operational existence—who is governing the universe? Which majestic power facilitates all that is essential for life and growth? How the Earth rotates around the sun? How water, seas and mountains stand in obedience to their Creator, the Lord of the world and the Creator of life and death? How the universe and human species are connected together and what are the imperatives of living in co-existence with the rest of mankind? Perhaps such an exploratory visit to space will help to melt down some of their inborn arrogance, indifference and cruelty to the fellow human beings. The outcome could produce human optimism and pave the viable opportunities and means for peacemaking and co-existence. Indeed, leadership adaptability to change in democracy is a mark of intelligence and responsibility. ■

Dr Mahboob A. Khawaja is the author of several publications including the latest: Global Peace, Security and Conflict Resolution: Approaches to Understand the Current Issues and Future-Making.



An erratic, petulant, clueless President Trump has once again proved that he is unfit to serve as commander-in-chief of the United States army. With his decision to authorize the assassination of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, he has sparked a high-stakes international crisis. Killing a high-ranking official of a sovereign nation is, by any standard, an act of war. Gen. Soleimani's assassination is a blatant violation of international law, especially given the fact that the assassination involved an armed attack inside Iraq, against Iranian and Iraqi citizens, without the involvement or permission of the Iraqi government.

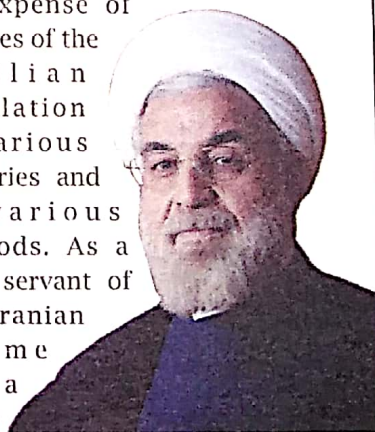


Gen. Soleimani's Assassination

Cry "Havoc!" and let slip the dogs of war!

On January 03, Qasim Suleimani, a top Iranian security force commander and the architect of Tehran's regional military operations, was killed in Baghdad by a drone strike which was authorized by US President Donald J. Trump. The Pentagon justified this gruesome act by claiming that Maj. Gen. Suleimani was planning to attack Americans in the region and that he had approved a recent attack on the US Embassy in Baghdad. But, it must be clear to all that Trump's decision to authorize this assassination was typically rash and short-sighted. Blowing to smithereens a high-ranking official of a sovereign nation is, indubitably, an act of war. Doing so without any discernible plan for what to do next is

an act of stupidity, one for which American might have to pay dearly with American blood and treasure. The killing of Qassem Soleimani and his close associates is without question one of the most significant developments in the Middle East over the last several years. For many years, Soleimani was the face of Iranian influence in the region, sometimes at the expense of the lives of the civilian population of various countries and by various methods. As a loyal servant of the Iranian regime and a power



Shafqat Javed
 A powerful figure in Tehran, he not only had a hand in the design of the country's foreign policy goals for the region but also succeeded in implementing those plans personally. On many occasions, it was falsely reported that he had been killed or wounded in conflict zones in Syria and Iraq. There were even reports that indicated debate between Israeli and US officials over the wisdom of targeting Soleimani. According to these reports, US officials were more cautious about the potential outcomes and consequences of a move against such a high-profile target, and had even prevented his assassination in several instances. Indeed, since reports started to emerge about the assassination, the initial response among American Twitter users has been one of extreme caution.

Legality of US Strike

What does the US constitution say?

The killing of Soleimani, a senior military official of a country with which the United States is not at war, in a third country—without that host country's consent—raises numerous legal questions. Since the US Congress did not specifically authorize the attack, President Trump has presumably relied on his constitutional authority as commander-in-chief and chief executive. Under Article II of the Constitution, the president has broad authority to order the use of military force not only to defend the United States and American individuals against actual or anticipated attacks but also to advance other important national interests.

On January 04, the White House sent a report to Congress about the strike, as required under the 1973 War Powers Resolution. Such reports generally specify the domestic law basis upon which the president relied to use force. In this case, however, the administration took the exceptionally rare step of submitting a wholly classified report. It is surprising the White House did not submit an unclassified report, accompanied by a classified annex.

International Law

After authorising the air strike that killed Maj. Gen. Soleimani, US President Donald Trump said the US had expected an "imminent attack" by Iran, while Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said that Iran was planning "imminent action" that threatened US citizens. The legality of the attack under international law is, however, dubious. Under the United Nations Charter, the United States is prohibited from using force in or against another country without that country's consent or without the authorization of the UN Security Council, unless the use of force is in self-defence against an armed attack or to prevent an imminent attack.

If the Trump administration believed that Soleimani was planning imminent attacks against US forces or US interests, the strike would be lawful under Article 51 of the UN Charter and under general principles of international law—although other governments might not agree. But, to meet the requirements for self-defence under international law, the US had to have acted to avert an imminent attack.

If the administration justifies the strike as an action in self-defence, the United States is required by Article 51 to promptly report the action to the Security Council. It has yet to do so. Such letters generally provide the legal basis for the use of force and the circumstances justifying it.

Questions have mostly arisen over how killing one of the most influential Iranians in the world constitutes part of an "exit strategy" in the escalation of tension between the US and Iran. Some have even questioned the legal grounds of the authorization to commit such an attack without congressional approval, considering the possible stakes could be an all-out war with Iran.

The fact that President Donald Trump did not make an official statement on his Twitter account in wake of the attack, instead posting nothing more than an American flag, has increased the number of unknowns surrounding the incident. For now, however, more important questions surround the potential outcome of the attack.

For some, this is not even relevant, while others see the current situation as a veritable state of war, or a declaration as such by the US. However, there are too many unknowns about the nature of a possible next step in this war. There are serious debates, firstly, on the location of a possible war and what kind of instruments the parties could use in order to retaliate against one another. The pledge by officials in Tehran to "avenge" Soleimani can be considered a forewarning of the coming storm over an already destabilized Middle East. In their view, given the profile of Soleimani, revenge is almost unavoidable given how lack of retaliatory measures would put major pressure on the regime at such a critical juncture in its history.

In the case of one or a series of revenge attacks, escalation would be unavoidable, with violence spiralling out of control into a formal declaration of war. The location of these reprisals will not be known until they take place. Possible targets could include either Americans themselves or American allies in the region. Most dangerously, they could target both.

Others say that even if there was a Iranian side, this retaliation might not immediately and would be extremely

retaliation from the take place measured. Iran may prefer to wait until the situation cools down to catch

QASEM SOLEIMANI?

• Soleimani was born in 1955 in Iran

• He joined the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps in early 1980

• He then joined the Iranian forces in its war with Iraq

• In war with Iraq, he was an officer for an Iranian military service company

• Soleimani led an Iranian elite force known as Thar Allah 41 corps

• Following the war, he was promoted to be among the best ten military commanders of Iranian contingents spread across the borders with Iraq

• He was appointed commander of the Quds Force in 1998, and promoted as general.

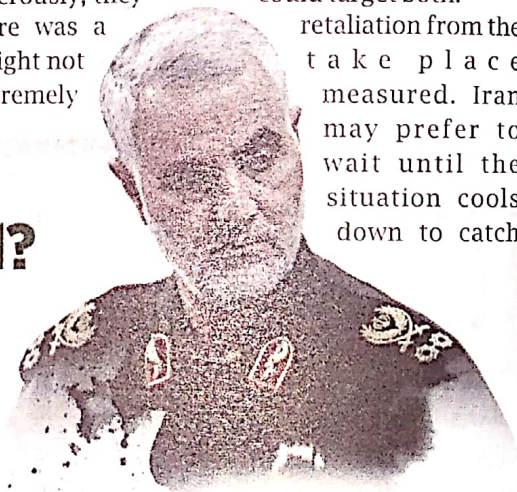
• He was tasked to protect the Iranian revolution against any coup attempt in addition to carrying out military and secret operations outside the Iranian borders

• Soleimani was declared a "terrorist and supporter of terrorism" by the U.S.

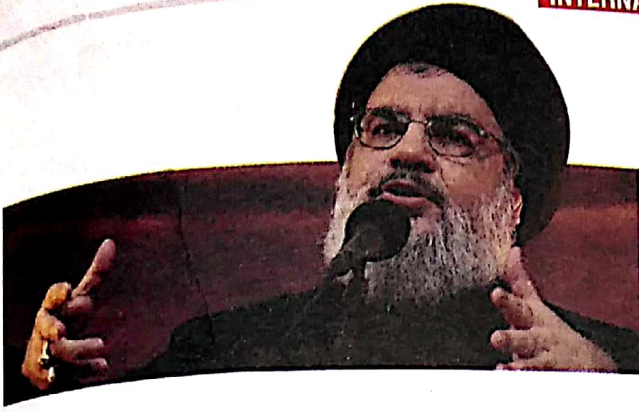
• He was among the Iranian individuals who were sanctioned by the UN Security Council resolution 1747

• On May 18, 2011, the U.S. imposed more sanctions on him as he was accused of providing support and arms to the Syrian regime

• Also, on June 24, 2011, an official statement by the European Union said that European sanctions were imposed on three Iranian commanders of the Revolutionary Guards including Soleimani for supporting the Assad regime in his suppression to the Syrian uprising



INTERNATIONAL



its targets unprepared—or it could even avoid an attack altogether, as this would ultimately have the potential to lead to a sharp escalation of the situation.

Meanwhile, the fact that President Trump is considered so unpredictable when it comes to foreign and national security policy may turn out to be an important asset for the US. In fact, in Tehran, some will definitely presume that President Trump's order to kill Soleimani is a clear indication that he has no red lines at all when it comes to the Iranian regime. Thus, retaliation may bring about a more dangerous situation for the Iranian regime than might otherwise have been the case.

In the meantime, there will be many questions that crop up about the nature of the attack itself. One of the most important of these surrounds the decision process behind the order to kill Qassem Soleimani. Was this decision taken in the light of the embassy attack in Baghdad or was it planned beforehand? Who was in favour of carrying out this attack and who was more cautious about it within the administration? Where did President Trump stand when it came to killing Soleimani? Was there a divergence of opinion between the various US agencies? What were the potential second and third steps after these attacks? What is next for US foreign policy toward Iran going forward? Will the US commit to protecting its allies if there is a direct or indirect attack from the Iranian side? Were any foreign governments involved in the planning, decision to execute or execution of the attack? If yes, then what is the measure of influence these foreign governments had in taking this critical decision?

Considering the gravity of the tension between Iran and the US right now, we may consider that this act was likely the last nail in the coffin of a potential rapprochement between the two nations over Iran's nuclear deal. But what is next? Could this justify the Iranian regime's attempt to develop a nuclear weapon? Indeed, many questions hang over the future.

All of these questions will be important in determining the potential outcome of this attack. Although there are different approaches on how to judge the attack right now, the certain consensus among observers seems to be that this is not only one game-changer in US-Iranian relations but could change the nature of games across the region. ■

The writer is a member of staff.

Will Iran retaliate?

A red flag, which symbolizes a call to avenge a person who is killed unjustly, was raised during the funeral of Maj. Gen. Soleimani in Qom, the holiest city of the Shiites in Iran. The red flag, which flew on top of the Jamkaran mosque for the first time in history, is a declaration that Iran is ready for war. Thousands of mourners, dressed mostly in black or in military clothes, chanted "death to America" and "America is the great Satan" during the funeral ceremony, carrying the flags of Iran-backed militias that are strongly loyal to Soleimani. In Lebanon, Hezbollah supporters gathered to curse the US as well.

The chief of Lebanon's Iran-allied Hezbollah movement, Hassan Nasrallah, said that the US killing of Soleimani in Iraq was a "new phase" for the Middle East. "His killing marks the beginning of a new phase and a new date not only for Iran or Iraq, but to the whole region," Nasrallah said. Addressing his followers via a TV video link, Nasrallah said that Soleimani's killing was "not an ambiguous assassination. This is a blatant and clear crime ... The death of Soleimani is not an Iranian issue ... It is the issue of all groups of resistance in the region—in Syria, Lebanon and Yemen."

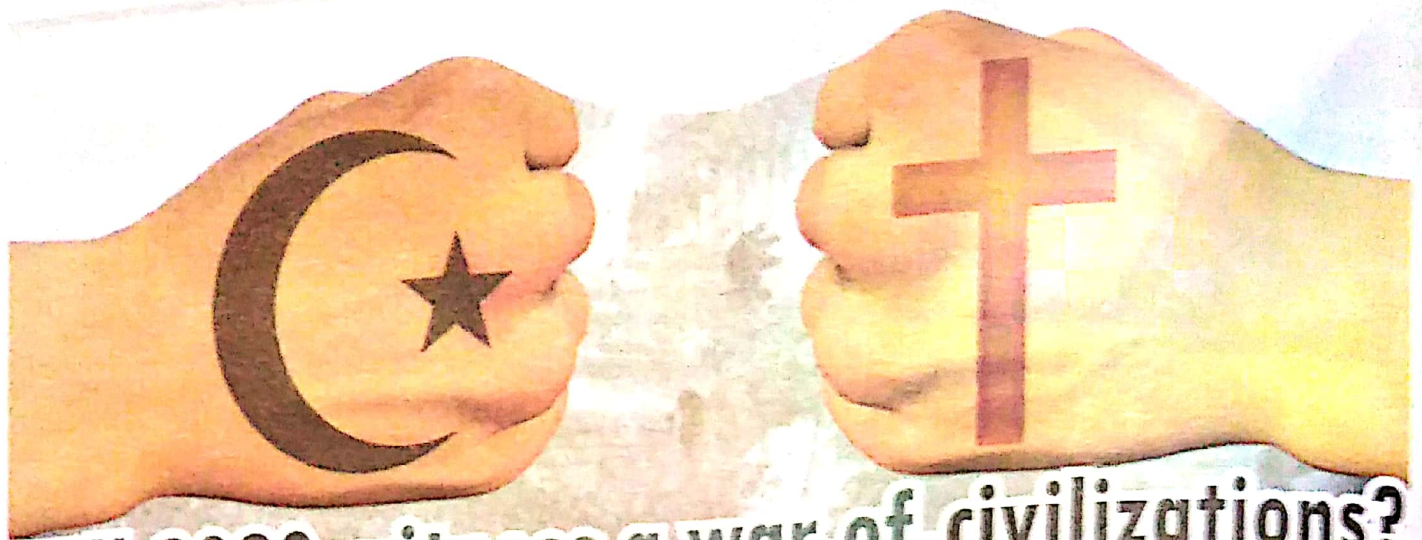
So, from the on-ground situation, it seems probable that Iran certainly will strike back forcefully—not just because of what the Supreme Leader said, but because of how prominent a figure Soleimani was for Iranians generally. Iran will strike back in ways and at times of its own choosing, but this may include attempts to assassinate a US public figure with standing in the United States comparable to the standing Soleimani had in Iran.

Possible Targets

Since the Iran-Iraq war, Tehran avoided facing enemies directly and preferred asymmetrical warfare using its developing proxy tools. Soleimani had loyal, experienced and talented men around him. But none of them has the abilities of Soleimani. Even Soleimani's dead body is more inspiring than his lieutenants. Could his absence make Iran take wrong decisions such as retaliating with anger, without thinking through next steps? Would Iran strike US troops deployed in the region and its bases in Syria and Iraq? Would Iran lose control because of its hunger for revenge? The US has relatively small deployments of troops in Iraq and Syria who could be easily targeted in revenge attacks. But US President Donald Trump has proved that his answer would be with fire and fury. The US' killing of Soleimani after the attempt of Hashd al-Shaabi members to storm the US Embassy in Baghdad has shown that Trump can use US military power in unpredictable ways. For that reason, Iran might wait to respond directly, but it could use its proxies in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Yemen or elsewhere against the US. The killing of Soleimani has left those groups chomping at the bit, and it is likely that they will strengthen their forces and political factions.

Possible targets for Iranian retaliation might include Israel, according to experts, but this seems to be a low possibility for now. The Iran-backed Hezbollah terror group dominating Lebanon has an arsenal of tens of thousands of rockets that can hit Israel. But would Tehran take the risk that Israel would hit Lebanon back? It is unlikely for Iran to risk an all-out war that would bring another war to Lebanon, which is already in a severe economic crisis and trying to deal with its own anti-government protests.

On the other hand, the US allies in the Gulf—the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and, especially, Bahrain—can be a target for Iran. To unleash its proxy power, Iran might respond by directly targeting the US allies in the Gulf and their oil infrastructure. Bombings, rocket attacks and even missile assaults on ships or oil facilities, as Iran did in September, are possible responses.



Will 2020 witness a war of civilizations?

Waqar-ul-Hassan

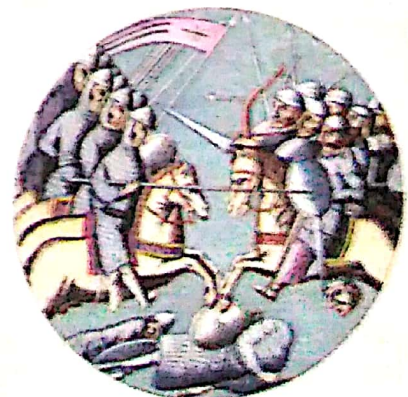
Although Israel today has developed close relations with several Gulf states and the EU is trying to maintain or improve its relations with China despite US pressure, these are the results of an interest-based understanding of the state. After all, we can say the underlying discourse of all interest-based conflicts—from the Rohingya crisis to the sectarian divisions in Syria, from India's anti-Muslim, fascist policies, on Kashmir in particular, to Russia's upheaval in parallel with a new rhetoric of nationalism which highlights Orthodox Christian identity—is the perception of cultural and religious differences as a threat. However, it is necessary to see that the underlying cause of these conflicts is the conflict of economic interests and that cultural diversity is a functional tool to sustain this tension. When one looks at Turkey through such a lens, one finds it to be one of the countries that are in the most difficult situations. Indeed, Turkey, which connects Asia and Europe, wants to establish good relations with the countries in the east, most of which are its neighbours. However, apart from Iran, none of them are Muslim-majority countries, and the sectarian divide between Iran and Turkey is one of the countries' irreconcilable differences. Meanwhile, Syria and Iraq have already been failed states for a long time. Turkey, on the other hand, is under pressure from the EU and the US, of which it was once a satellite country. For instance, some issues have pushed Turkey closer to Russia or Iran. When the US imposes sanctions on Iran,

Francis Fukuyama's post-Gold War era book "The End of History and the Last Man," which made a bold claim that nations no longer have an ideological alternative but human rights, liberal democracy and capitalist, free market values, has failed the test of time. On the other hand, "The Clash of Civilizations," written as a response by Fukuyama's teacher Samuel Huntington, who argues that the root of ideological clashes will be cultural and religious differences after the collapse of the Soviet Union, remains relevant.

which shares land borders and has been Turkey's trading partner for centuries, Ankara is expected to obey it word for word to the detriment of its own economy. The EU, on the other hand, has put the entire burden of the refugee issue on Turkey, and placed multiple arms embargoes on it due to its military intervention in Syria, as it tried to secure its longest border and protect itself from terrorism.

And, there is the question of Libya, which is one of the most important examples that falsify Huntington's thesis. In this conflict, Egypt, one of the three largest countries in the Islamic world, is not cooperating with Muslim-majority Turkey, but with Orthodox-majority Greece and Zionist Israel. Also, Saudi Arabia, the Muslim country with the highest symbolic value as it hosts Mecca within its borders, declared Qatar and Turkey its mortal enemies and is pursuing policies that are 100% in line with the US and Israel.

In this respect, 2020 will be a year when tensions will continue to escalate but hopefully not reach a breaking point. ■





Conflicts to Watch in 2020

The understandings and balance of power on which the global order had once been predicated are no longer operative. Washington is both eager to retain the benefits of its leadership and unwilling to shoulder the burdens of carrying it. As a consequence, it is guilty of the cardinal sin of any great power: allowing the gap between ends and means to grow. These days, neither friend nor foe knows quite where America stands. The roles of other major powers are changing, too. China exhibits the patience of a nation confident in its gathering influence, but in no hurry to fully exercise it. It chooses its battles, focusing on self-identified priorities. Russia, in contrast, displays the impatience of a nation grateful for

Muhammad Sheraz

the power. Portraying itself as a truer and more reliable partner than Western powers, it backs some allies with direct military support while sending in private contractors to Libya and sub-Saharan Africa to signal its growing influence. The consequences of these geopolitical trends can be deadly. Here is a brief mention of five conflicts that will have far-reaching implications in the year 2020.

1. Afghanistan

More people are being killed as a result of fighting in Afghanistan than in any other current conflict in the world. Yet there may be a window in 2020 to set in motion a peace process aimed at ending the decades-long war. As regard the prospects of peace in this war-torn country, last year

Local conflicts serve as mirrors for global trends. The ways they ignite, unfold, persist and are resolved reflect shifts in great powers' relations, the intensity of their competition and the breadth of regional actors' ambitions. They highlight issues with which the international system is obsessed and those toward which it is indifferent. Today, these wars tell the story of a global system caught in the early swell of sweeping change, of regional leaders both emboldened and frightened by the opportunities such a transition presents.

did see some light in US-Taliban diplomacy. After months of quiet talks, US Envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban leaders agreed on and initialled a draft text. But, hopes dashed when Trump abruptly declared the talks dead in early

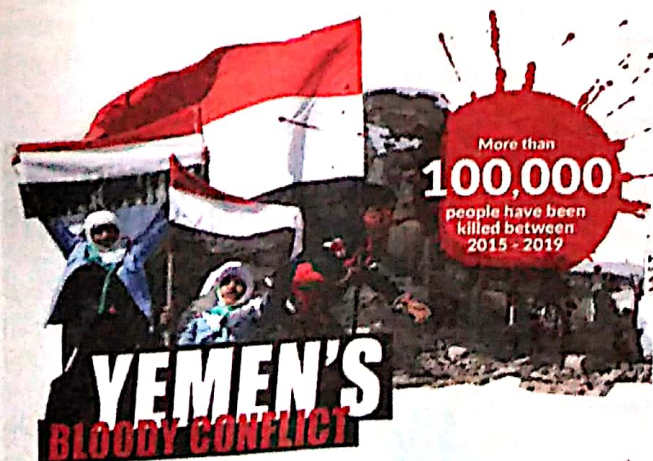
September, invoking a Taliban attack that killed a US soldier as a reason to nix the agreement his envoy had inked. Nonetheless, after a prisoner swap in November appeared to have overcome Trump's resistance, US diplomats and Taliban representatives have started



talking again. Whether they will return to the same understanding remains unclear, though. In reality, the US has no better option than pursuing a deal with the Taliban. Continuing with the status quo offers only the prospect of endless war, while precipitously pulling US forces out without an agreement could herald a return to the multi-front civil war of the 1990s and even worse violence. However, any deal should pave the way for talks among Afghans, which means tying the pace of the US troop withdrawal not only to counter-terrorism goals but also to the Taliban's good-faith participation in talks with the Afghan government and other powerful Afghan leaders. A US-Taliban agreement would mark only the beginning of a long road to a settlement among Afghans, which is a prerequisite for peace. But it almost certainly offers the only hope of calming today's deadliest war.

2. Yemen

Yemen has become a critical fault-line in the Middle East-wide rivalry between Iran on the one hand, and the United States and its regional allies on the other. In 2018,



aggressive international intervention in Yemen prevented what UN officials deemed the world's worst humanitarian crisis from deteriorating further. The year 2020 could offer a rare opportunity to wind down the war.

A December 2018 deal, known as the Stockholm Agreement, fostered a fragile ceasefire around the Red Sea port city of Hodeida between the internationally recognised government of President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi and the Houthi rebels who seized the capital, Sanaa, from him in September 2014. Since then, the more dynamic aspects of the conflict have been a battle within the anti-Houthi front pitting southern secessionists against the Hadi government, and a cross-border war that has seen the launch of Houthi missiles and retaliatory Saudi airstrikes. Today's window of opportunity reflects movement on these latter two fronts. First, fighting between loyalists of the Southern Transitional Council (STC) and the government in August 2019 pushed the anti-Houthi bloc to the point of collapse. In response, Riyadh had little choice but to broker a truce between them to sustain its war effort. Second, in September, a missile attack on major Saudi oil production facilities highlighted the risks of a war involving the US, its Gulf allies, and Iran that none of them seems to want. This helped push the Saudis and Houthis to engage in talks aimed at de-escalating their conflict and removing Yemen from the playing field of the regional Saudi-Iran power struggle; both sides have significantly reduced cross-border strikes. If this leads to a UN-brokered political process in 2020, an end may be in sight.

3. Libya

The war in Libya risks getting worse in the coming months, as rival factions increasingly rely on foreign military backing to change the balance of power. The threat of major violence has loomed since the country split into two parallel administrations following contested elections in 2014. UN attempts at reunification faltered. The Islamic State established a small foothold but was defeated; militias fought over Libya's oil infrastructure on the coast; and tribal clashes unsettled the country's vast southern desert. But fighting never tipped into a broader confrontation.

Over the past year, however, it has taken a dangerous new turn. In April 2019, forces commanded by Khalifa Haftar, which are backed by the government in the east, laid siege to Tripoli, edging the country toward all-out war. Haftar claims to be combating terrorists. In reality, most of his rivals are the same militias that defeated the Islamic State, with US and other Western support, three years ago. Haftar's latest offensive has found support not only in Cairo and Abu Dhabi but also in Moscow, which has provided him with military aid under the cover of a private security company. President Donald Trump, whose



administration had supported the Sarraj government and UN-backed peace process, reversed course in April 2019, following a meeting with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi. Turkey, in turn, has upped support for Tripoli, thus far helping stave off its fall to Haftar. Ankara now threatens to intervene further. As a result, the conflict's protagonists are no longer merely armed groups in Tripoli fending off an assault by a wayward military commander. Instead, Emirati drones and airplanes, hundreds of Russian private military contractors, and African soldiers recruited into Haftar's forces confront Turkish drones and military vehicles, raising the spectre of an escalating proxy battle on the Mediterranean.

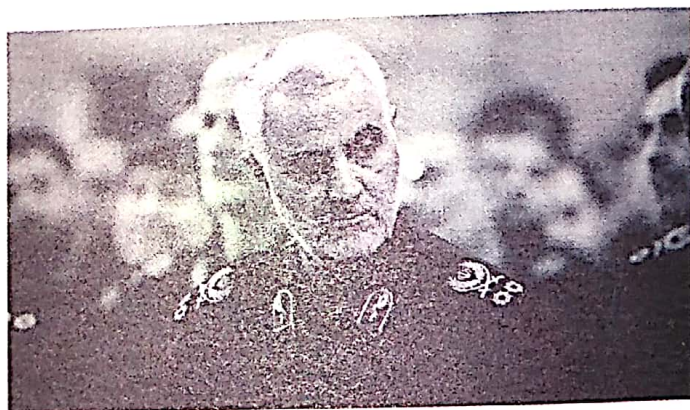
4. The US, Iran, Israel, and the Persian Gulf

Tensions between the United States and Iran rose dangerously in 2019; the year ahead could bring their rivalry to boiling point. The Trump administration's decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear agreement—The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)—and impose mounting unilateral sanctions against Tehran has inflicted significant costs, but thus far has produced neither the diplomatic capitulation Washington seeks nor the internal collapse for which it may hope. Instead, Iran has responded to what it regards as an all-out siege by incrementally ramping up its nuclear programme in violation of the agreement, aggressively flexing its regional muscle, and firmly suppressing any sign of domestic unrest. Tensions have also risen between Israel and Iran. Unless this cycle is broken, the risk of a broader confrontation will rise. Tehran's shift from a policy of maximum patience to one of maximum resistance was a consequence of the US playing one of the aces in its coercive deck: ending already-limited exemptions on Iran's oil sales. Seeing little relief materialise from the nuclear deal's remaining parties, President Hassan Rouhani in May announced that his government would begin to violate the agreement incrementally. Since then, Iran has broken caps on its uranium enrichment rates and stockpile sizes, started testing advanced centrifuges, and restarted its enrichment plant in its Fordow bunker. With every new breach, Iran may hollow out the agreement's nonproliferation

gains to the extent that the European signatories will decide they must impose their own penalties. At some point, Iran's advances could prompt Israel or the US to resort to military action.

A string of incidents in the Gulf in the past year, culminating in the September 14 attack on Saudi energy facilities, underscored how the US-Iranian standoff reverberates across the broader region. Meanwhile, recurrent Israeli military strikes against Iranian and Iran-linked targets inside Syria and Lebanon—as well as in Iraq and the Red Sea basin, according to Tehran—present a new, dangerous front. Any of these flash points could explode, by design or by accident.

Recognition of the high stakes and costs of war has nudged some of Iran's Gulf rivals to seek de-escalation even as they continue to back the Trump administration's "maximum pressure" approach. The UAE has opened lines of communication with Tehran, and Saudi Arabia has engaged in serious dialogue with Yemen's H-uthis. The potential for conflict has also prompted efforts, led by French President Emmanuel Macron, to help the US and Iran find a diplomatic off-ramp. US President Donald Trump, eager to avoid war, has been willing to hear out his proposal, and the Iranians are also interested in any proposition that provides some sanctions relief. But with deep distrust, each side has tended to wait for the



other to make the first concession. A diplomatic breakthrough to de-escalate tensions between the Gulf states and Iran or between Washington and Tehran remains possible. But, as sanctions take their toll and Iran fights back, time is running out.

5. Kashmir

After falling off the international radar for years, a flare-up between India and Pakistan in 2019 over the disputed region of Kashmir brought the crisis back into sharp focus. First came a February suicide attack against Indian paramilitaries in Kashmir. India retaliated by bombing an alleged militant camp in Pakistan, prompting a Pakistani strike in Indian-Occupied Kashmir. Tensions spiked again in August when India revoked the state of Jammu



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and Kashmir's semi-autonomous status, which had served as the foundation for its contested joining of India 72 years ago, and brought it under New Delhi's direct rule. Narendra Modi's government, emboldened by its May re-election, made the change in India's only Muslim-majority state without any local consultation. Not only that: before announcing its decision, it brought in tens of thousands of extra troops, imposed a communications blackout, and arrested thousands of Kashmiris, including the entire political class, many of whom were not hostile to India.

These moves have exacerbated an already profound sentiment of alienation among Kashmiris that will likely further fuel a long-running freedom movement there. Separately, the

Indian government's new citizenship law, widely regarded as anti-Muslim, has sparked protests inviting violent police responses, in many parts of India. Together with the actions in Kashmir, these developments appear to confirm Modi's intention to implement a Hindu nationalist agenda.

New Delhi's claims that the situation is back to normal are misleading. Internet access remains cut off, soldiers deployed in August are still there, and all Kashmiri leaders, even those considered pro-India, remain in

detention. Modi's government seems to have no roadmap for what comes next.

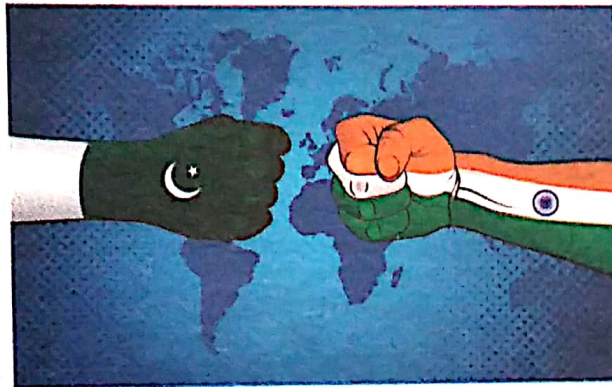
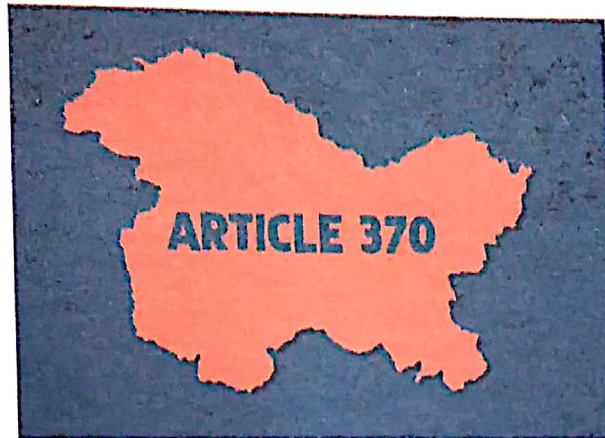
Pakistan has tried to rally international support against India's illegal decision on Kashmir's status. But its stance is hardly heard as most Western powers see New Delhi as

an important trade partner. They are unlikely to rock the boat over Kashmir, unless violence spirals.

The gravest danger is the risk that a militant attack sets off an escalation. In Kashmir, freedom fighters are lying low but still active. Indeed, India's heavy-handed military operations in Kashmir

over the past few years have inspired a new homegrown generation, whose ranks are likely to swell further after the latest repression. A strike on Indian forces almost certainly would precipitate Indian retaliation against Pakistan, regardless of whether Islamabad is complicit in the plan. In a worst-case scenario, the two nuclear-armed neighbours could stumble into war.

External actors should push for rapprochement before it is too late. That won't be easy. India is playing to its domestic constituency, and is in no mood for compromise. If a new crisis emerges, foreign powers will have to throw their full weight behind preserving peace on the disputed border. ■



Syria

Syria – a conflict not on this list – has been a microcosm of all these trends: there, the US combined a hegemon's bombast with a bystander's pose. Local actors (such as the Kurds) were emboldened by US overpromising and then disappointed by US under-delivery. Meanwhile, Russia stood firmly behind its ally, while others in the neighbourhood (namely, Turkey) sought to profit from the chaos.

Since the Syrian war broke out in 2011, the prospect of an end to the prolonged crisis has been alternating between hope and disappointment with new developments emerging every year, especially in the year 2019 that has witnessed sophisticated changes in the conflict-torn Middle Eastern country. In a positive sign of regaining the control of the entire country, the Syrian army in 2019 was able to consolidate the government's grip on key areas across the country including the capital Damascus.

However, the Syrian crisis is more like a proxy war than a civil one between the government and rebels, as it has become apparent that many foreign forces stationed on the Syrian soil are not ready to pull back without achieving their own gains.

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad recently highlighted the anti-terror war in Idlib as a priority of the Syrian government, which analysts said could be the title of the military operation in 2020.



Abdul Rasool Syed



The question that always haunts the intelligentsia and the hoi polloi alike is that why America can't help fighting wars? Why its chequered history is replete with wars without any apposite casus belli? The answer to such questions is quite simple: war is an economic sine qua non of the existence of the United States. Its economy is heavily dependent on its military capital; hence, if there is no war in the world, its economy is likely to nosedive—though the fact is never acknowledged by US political leaders, and seldom by even US media. The big arms companies operating in the United States serve as vertebral column to its economy. Without continuous and prolonged warfare that requires the deployment of their guns, bombs, tanks, warships, submarines, and other military paraphernalia, they would go out of business. This very situation eggs on the US to go to wars either overtly or covertly. According to chronological account of the United States, it has militarily intervened 223 times since its independence. So, does the fault lie in the evil nature of the individuals who ascend to power or is it the gargantuan appetite of the military industrial complex that prompts every US president—whether a pacifist or hawkish—to wage wars? Definitely, it is America's big arms manufac-

turers that keep the country engaged in wars since it is the question of their survival.

The record further shows that whenever there is a conflict anywhere in the world; nine times out of ten, it is the US that is involved in one way or another. It has a long history of engineering coups, toppling regimes and backing juntas all around the world.

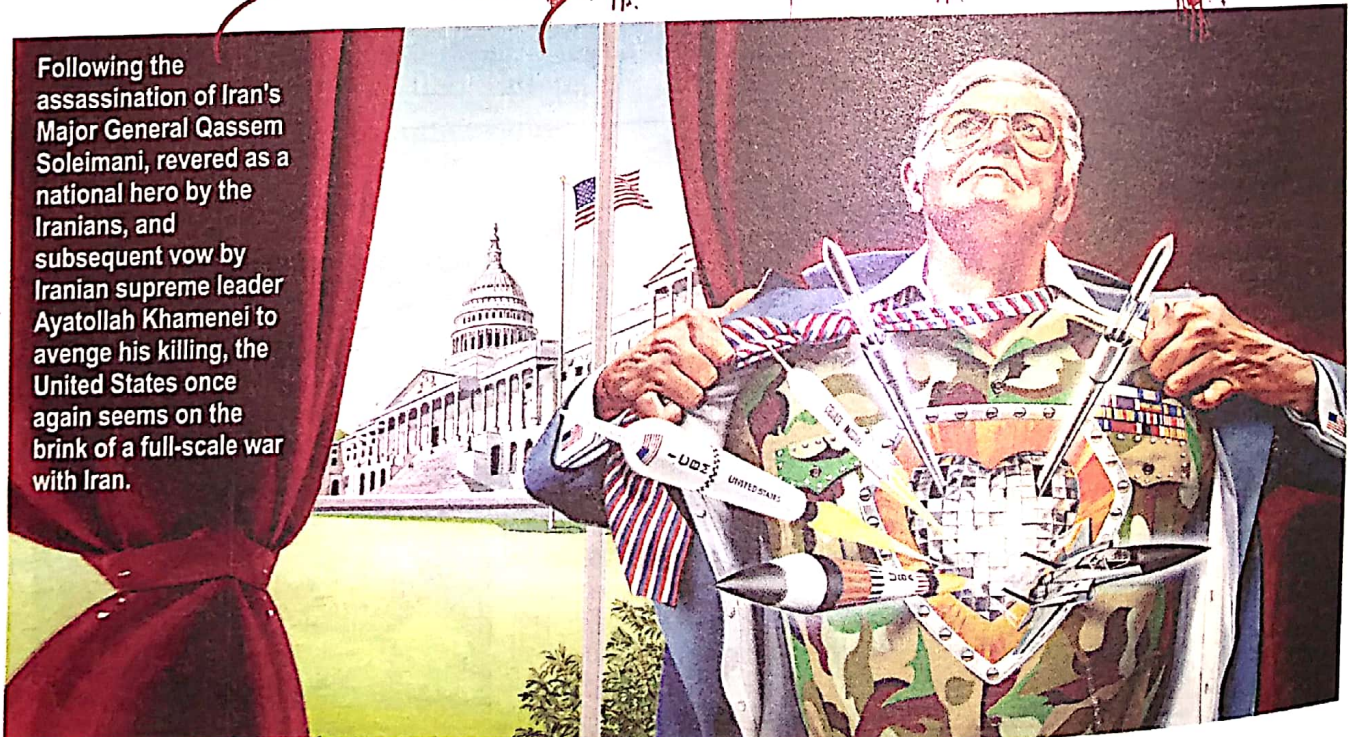
Some examples of such interventions include: Iraq in 1953, Guatemala in 1954, Congo in 1960, Dominican Republic in 1961, South Vietnam in 1963, Brazil in 1964, Chile in 1973, Iraq in 1992 and in 2003, Syria in 2011, and finally Ukraine in 2014. Currently, it is Iran that is facing the wrath of Uncle Sam.

Most economists believe that the United States is a state that is oxygenated by its war industry. The joint venture of the US arms industry and the government is as old as the country itself. Even American civil war turned out to be immensely profitable for American arms manufacturers. However, the end of the war resulted in a steep decline in demand of their products that led many companies to bankruptcy. But those who managed to secure foreign contracts, continued to mint money out of this business. Later, Spanish-American war also helped the warmongers and arms manufacturers.

The story does not end here. In capitalism, the destruction of one country or region feeds into prosperity of another.

America can't Help **Fighting Wars**

Following the assassination of Iran's Major General Qassem Soleimani, revered as a national hero by the Iranians, and subsequent vow by Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Khamenei to avenge his killing, the United States once again seems on the brink of a full-scale war with Iran.

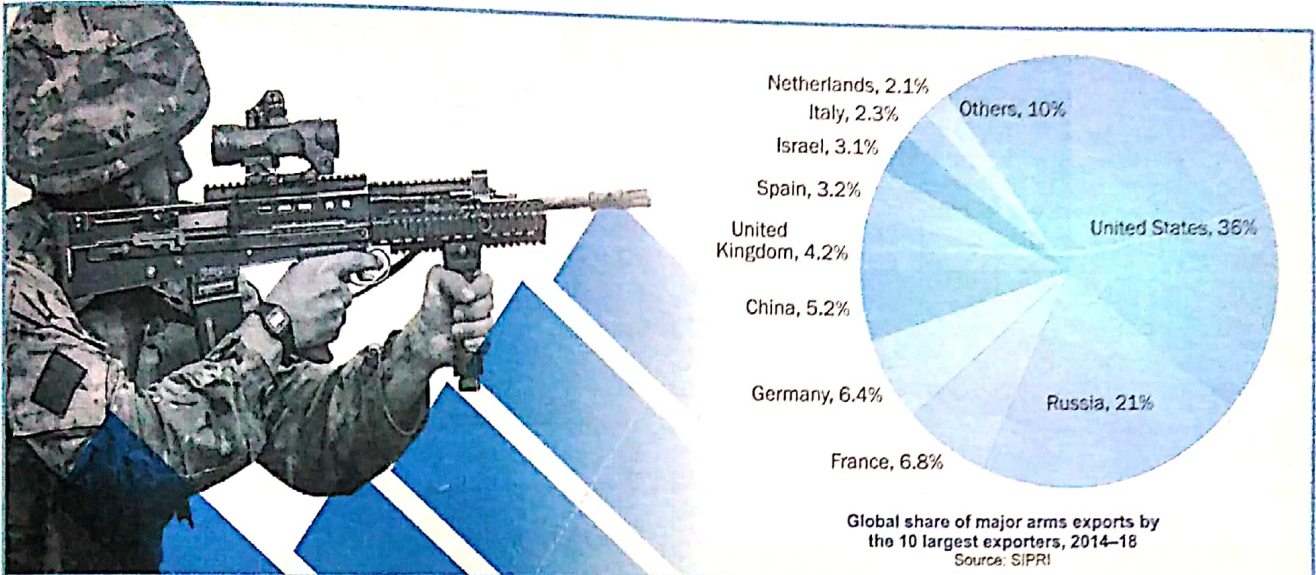


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This is what exactly happened during World War I. The US remained neutral during most of WWI and only entered the conflict in April 1917. But the mobilization of its economy was extraordinary. Over four million Americans served in the armed forces and the American economy produced a vast supply of raw materials and munitions.

means of huge orders of a military nature."

The war warded off the effects of the Great Depression, giving Americans higher wages and increasing their purchasing power. It is widely believed that American giants also immensely exploited this dreadful carnage of the 20th century.



The end of the war resulted in a huge slump in production. Some historians even claim that the state of peace was one of the contributing factors to the Great Depression. This economic crisis caused soaring of unemployment to new heights—as high as 25 percent.

This grim situation prompted Franklin D. Roosevelt, the then president of the United States, to launch the ambitious New Deal. But the deal created jobs for only four million Americans while, on the contrary, World War II provided every American with a job.

According to Dr Jacques Pauwels, a Research Associate at the Centre for Research on Globalization, it cannot be denied that the Great Depression in America only ended during, and because of, WWII. Dr Pauwels writes: "Economic demand rose spectacularly when the war ...

allowed American industry to produce unlimited amounts of war equipments ... In addition, the American industry also supplied humungous amount of equipment to the British and even the Soviets via Lend-Lease. The key problem of the Great Depression—the disequilibrium between supply and demand—was thus resolved because the state 'primed the pump' of economic demand by

According to noted historian, Stuart D. Brandes, "[B]etween 1942 and 1945, the net profits of America's 2,000 biggest firms were more than 40 percent higher than during the period 1936–1939 ... This largesse benefited the American business world in general, but in particular that relatively restricted elite of big corporations known as 'big businesses or 'corporate America'. During the war, fewer than 60 firms obtained 75 percent of all lucrative military and other state orders." Many economists claim that a phenomenal increase was witnessed in economic activity during wartime. For instance, the GDP growth skyrocketed to over 17 percent in 1942.

After WWII, the USSR and its communism were used as a bogey to multiply affluence earned through military

spending. The Korean War may have killed three million people; it helped Washington achieve a phenomenal GDP growth rate of 11.4 percent in 1951 despite the fact that WWII was over. Although this growth decreased in subsequent years, it once again witnessed a boost in 1966 during the Vietnam War. So, the entire episode of Cold War supported the American arms industry. It became one of



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the largest sources of employment for Americans and its role in creation of jobs continues to this day.

To some extent, such dependence fuels conflicts as well. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the American arms industry witnessed a downward spiral. But soon, the bogey of Al-Qaeda and the war on terror was created.

Hence, it may not be astonishing that the largest US export deal to date is related to munitions. Trump struck a deal worth over \$300 billion with Saudi Arabia. His administration is also making efforts to strike arms deals with Japan, Qatar and other states. So, the million-dollar question here is: who is going to buy American arms if there is peace in the world?

According to an article penned by history professor Robert Reich in 2010: "Over 1,400,000 Americans are now on active duty, another 833,000 are in the reserves, many full time. Another 1,600,000 Americans work in companies that supply the military with everything from weapons to utensils." This reflects the dependence of Americans on arms companies for jobs. After 2008, the spectre of unemployment haunted Americans. Reich believed if the country did not have this giant military jobs programme, its unemployment rate would have been over 11.5 percent in 2010 instead of 9.5 percent.

Intellectuals argue that the US must get rid of this military spending and direct its resources towards other sectors that could create more jobs. A research report by Brown

University found that investments in elementary and secondary education creates nearly three times as many American jobs as defence spending while healthcare creates about twice. While \$1 million spent on defence creates 6.9 direct and indirect jobs, the same amount spent on elementary and secondary education creates 19.2 jobs. Spending of around \$1 million on healthcare creates 14.3 jobs.

To cap it all, America's ruling elite needs to divert its people's hard-earned money towards such sectors. This policy will not only end Washington's reliance on wars to create jobs at home but will also save millions of lives that are annihilated due to the insatiable appetite of the military-industrial complex.

Americans should take inspiration from the "Cross of Iron" speech that president Dwight D. Eisenhower delivered in April 1963. Here is a crucial excerpt from that speech:

"Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and are not clothed. This world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its labourers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children." □

The writer is a legal practitioner-cum-columnist based in Quetta.

THE TOP 5 YEMEN WAR PROFITEERS



1 BOEING

\$21+

BILLION

in weapons and parts sold to Saudi Arabia in the past decade

- 82 Apache helicopters
- 84 fighter jets
- 6,000 guided missile kits

\$1.2

BILLION

in maintenance and support contracts with Saudi Arabia during the Yemen war



LOCKHEED MARTIN

\$7.2+

BILLION

in weapons and parts sold to Saudi Arabia in the past decade

- 4 warships
- 165 targeting systems for warplanes
- 5,446 Hellfire missiles

\$1.36

BILLION

in maintenance and support contracts with Saudi Arabia during the Yemen war



RAYTHEON

\$1.8+

BILLION

in weapons and parts sold to Saudi Arabia in the past decade

- 11,357 anti-tank missiles
- 16,575 guided bombs

\$36.7

MILLION

in maintenance and support contracts with Saudi Arabia during the Yemen war



GENERAL ELECTRIC

\$1.2+

BILLION

in weapons and parts sold to Saudi Arabia in the past decade

- 515 engines for fighter jets

\$70.5

MILLION

in maintenance and support contracts with Saudi Arabia during the Yemen war

GENERAL DYNAMICS

\$124+

MILLION

in weapons and parts sold to Saudi Arabia in the past decade

- 467 tanks

434

PEOPLE

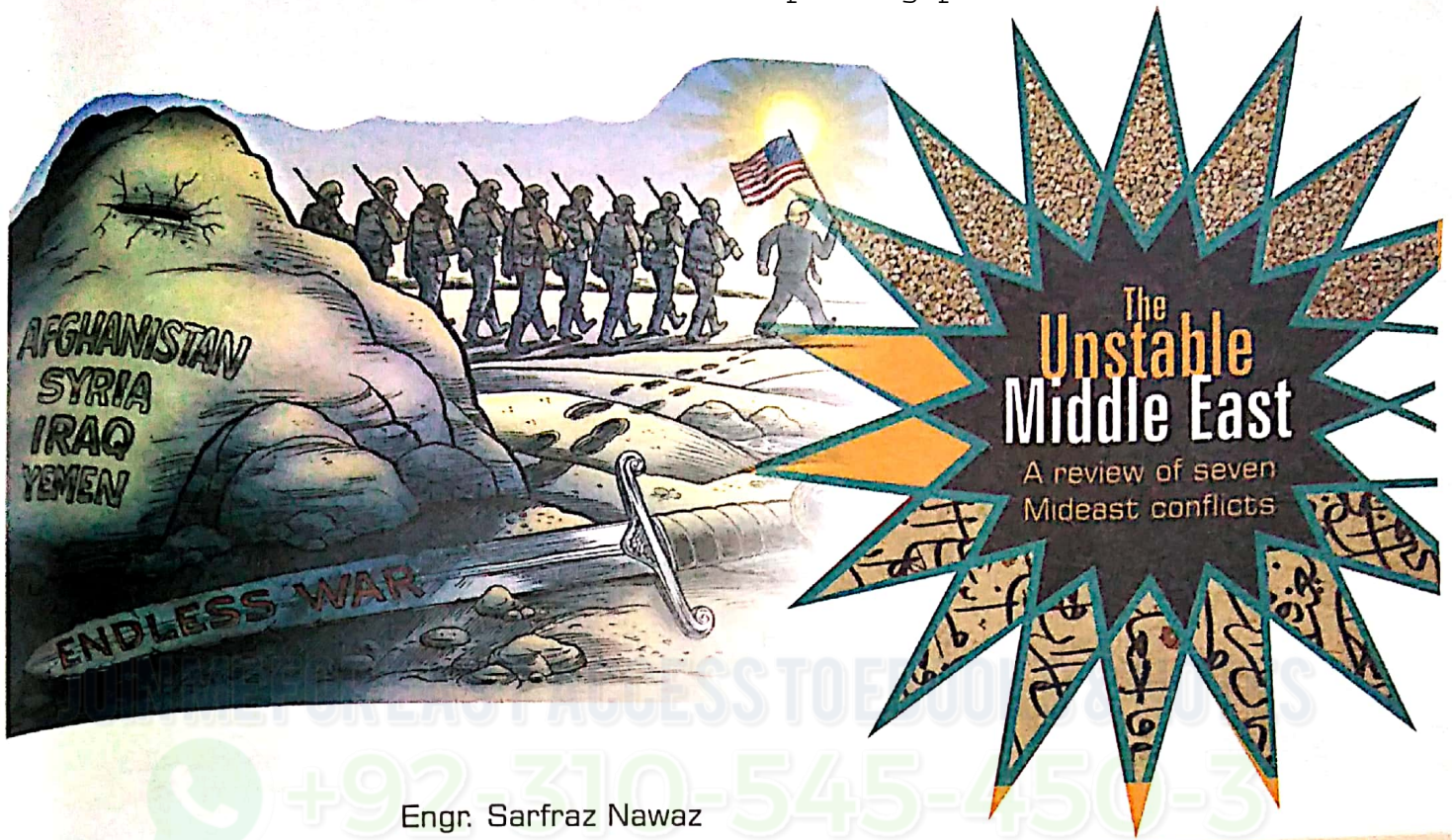
KNOWN NUMBER OF YEMENIS, mostly civilians, killed in unlawful airstrikes using U.S.-made weapons, according to human rights groups

\$109.3

BILLION

VALUE OF OFFENSIVE WEAPONS and weapons systems sold by U.S. companies to Saudi Arabia with U.S. government approval in the past 10 years





Engr. Sarfraz Nawaz

The dynamics of power politics in the Middle East have drastically changed. There are many conflicting and contrasting historic, economic, geo-political and strategic forces in this part of the world. With the elimination of strong autocrats like Saddam Hussein, Moammar al-Gaddafi; the mauling of Bashar al-Assad in the bloody Syrian civil war; the blockade of Qatar and the US policy tilt towards Saudi Arabia and allies, the entire region is in a state of flux. Unless some drastic measures are taken, the various conflicts in the region will become ever more intractable and exact a horrifying toll in blood and massive economic dislocation. The continuing severity of these crises and their repercussions will depend on whether or not the combatants assume a realistic posture, or new leadership rise and commit to finding equitable solutions that can endure. We must keep in mind though that the turmoil we experienced in 2019 may further intensify in 2020 because of the continuing global crisis of leadership and the challenges posed to the global order that was established in the wake of World War II.

The following brief review of seven Mideast conflicts reflects these developments and raises the question as to what must be done to change the dynamics in the hope of solving some of these conflicts.

Here is a quick guide to what, overall, ails the Middle East.

Betrayal

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is the oldest and most

It doesn't take a crystal ball to see that 2020 will be tumultuous in the Middle East. Libya's civil war has taken a dangerous turn, with Russian mercenaries and Turkish forces joining the fray as Gen. Khalifa Hifter's forces push into the capital. Yemen is still ravaged by economic blockade and war, despite recent efforts on all sides to de-escalate the conflict. Syria's civil war continues to metastasize, with a massive new wave of refugees fleeing violence in Idlib. Large-scale popular protests are challenging Iraq's government, which is bracing for fallout from the growing confrontation between the United States and Iran. Israel and the Palestinian territories could dramatically change their relationship, as the prospects of a two-state solution dissolve. And protest movements throughout the region could shake up half a dozen regimes.

intractable conflict that has consumed both peoples for more than 70 years, and has been further impaired by their leaderships' refusal to recognize each other's right to the same land. The leaders have betrayed their people by failing to appreciate each other's psychological, religious and historic attachment to the land and being blind to the inter-dispersement of the population that makes coexistence inevitable.

Israelis and Palestinians must now choose between endless violence, or living in amity and peace. Given the crisis in leadership, the hour calls for new visionary and courageous leaders who recognize that their people's future security and prosperity still rests on the only viable option—the two-state solution.

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Grandiose delusion

Following the revolution in 1979, Iran sought to become the region's hegemon equipped with nuclear weapons. The turmoil sweeping the Middle East points to Iran's complicity in most of the conflicts destabilizing the region, including Lebanon, Yemen, Iraq and Syria, while enlisting, financing and training jihadist and terrorist groups and threatening Israel's existence.

Although the United States' withdrawal from the Iran deal was a mistake, Iran's defiance led to crippling US sanctions. Seeking regime change and destroying Iran's nuclear facilities is not the answer.

While just about every country in the Middle East is understandably very concerned about the current US-Iranian strife getting out of hand in the wake of the assassination of Gen. Soleimani, still the only solution rests on the resumption of US-Iran talks.

Under any circumstances, Iran will have to play a constructive regional role and abandon its grandiose delusion to become a nuclear power and the region's hegemon.

Yearning for identity

Since Iraq was established in 1932, it went through frequent political turbulence, overshadowing its glorious history. Following the revolution in 1958, the Ba'ath Party, a nationalist and socialist regime, rose to power and was able to finance ambitious projects throughout the 1970s. In 1979, Saddam Hussein, a ruthless autocrat, assumed power and led the country to the disastrous Iran-Iraq and Gulf Wars. The 2003 war killed over 100,000 Iraqis, decimated the country and invited Iran to exercise immense influence on all Iraqi affairs, while the people suffer from profound economic hardship.

The current massive demonstrations demanding the ouster of Iran will ultimately prevail and restore Iraq's unique national identity, for which all Iraqis yearn.

Killing in God's name

The Yemen war will be recalled as perhaps the most horrific humanitarian disaster in modern history. It is a proxy war pitting the leader of Sunni Muslims—Saudi Arabia, which supports the internationally recognized government and is determined to prevent Iran from establishing a foothold in the Arabian Peninsula—against the leader of Shiite Muslims—Iran, which backs the Houthi rebels.

Yemen became the battleground, and the Yemenites are killed in God's name. Tens of thousands have died, millions are starving and over a million

children are infected with cholera, all while the country lies in ruin.

Five years later, the warring parties have finally realized the war is simply unwinnable. Ultimately, both sides must negotiate a solution.

The price of insatiable lust for power

Syria's civil war that started in 2011 is hard to fathom. What began as a peaceful demonstration became the most devastating war of the 21st century.

Had President Assad responded to his fellow citizens' demands by providing them with basic human rights, he might have averted a calamitous war that has killed nearly 700,000 people, rendered 11 million refugees or internally displaced and levelled half the country to the ground.

Now Assad is at the mercy of Russia, Turkey and Iran, who are determined to maintain a permanent foothold in Syria. Syria may well become the battleground between Israel and Iran, while scores of militia, jihadist and terrorist groups roam the country with no foreseeable end.

Erdogan's self-defeating dictatorship

Soon after Turkey's President Erdogan came to power in 2002, it was believed that under his stewardship, Turkey would become the first functioning Islamic democracy. He embarked on socio-political reforms and extensive economic developments, and engaged the Kurds to end a decades-long conflict while improving Turkey's prospective integration into the EU.

But then he reversed gears. For him, democracy was only a vehicle to promote his Islamic agenda, and lead the Sunni Muslim world. He pursued his religious and ideological rivals with vengeance, imprisoning tens of thousands of Gülen followers and Kurds, along with nearly 200



journalists who are still languishing in jails.

He will leave behind a legacy of a ruthless leader possessed with Ottoman revivalism, who squandered Turkey's prospective brilliant future for a self-defeating dictatorship.

Governments on edge about the 2020 US election

Usually, when the US government changes hands, US foreign policy in the Middle East remains steady and consistent. No more. If a Democrat replaces Donald Trump in the Oval Office, Middle Eastern regimes expect sharply reversed policies on such front-line issues as the nuclear agreement with Iran, the Israeli-Palestinian relationship, relations with Turkey and alliances in the Persian Gulf region. If Trump remains in office, he will be unleashed, convinced by his electoral success that even his most controversial policies were right. Facing such different possible futures, Middle Eastern governments could choose one of two approaches. They have good reason to be cautious, reaching out to both sides of the American partisan divide to ensure continuity in their relations. But some may see a closing window of opportunity for cherished goals—including potentially destabilizing moves that the Trump administration may wish to encourage, seeing possible political advantages. That means there's an unusually high risk that Israel will annex the West Bank or launch a major military strike against Iran or Hezbollah over the next 11 months.

Key regional players such as Saudi Arabia's crown prince, the United Arab Emirates and Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu placed their bets on Trump's presidency. Their enthusiastic embrace of Trump brought near-complete impunity for their regional adventurism, atrocities such as the murder of Washington Post contributing columnist Jamal Khashoggi and controversial domestic policies. That close relationship came at a cost, though: Both Congress and the US public increasingly identified them as Republican allies. Should a Democrat take the White House, Saudi Arabia in particular can expect serious repercussions. The Saudis' assessment of the likelihood of a new US administration in 2020 will likely guide their decision-making in the coming months.

Military action in Yemen: Who's for, who's against?



The year 2020 will most likely be as turbulent if not more so than 2019 due, mainly, to the lack of American leadership and the rush of other powers, especially Russia, China, and to a lesser extent Turkey and Iran, to fill the vacuum the United States is leaving behind.

Beyond that, however, we are witnessing a global transformation where nationalism, extremism

and xenophobia are on the rise, millions of refugees are on the move and poverty and economic dislocation are rampant, which together greatly contribute to instability and violence.

Sadly, these developments coupled with a worldwide crisis of leadership may well worsen before a new

Preordained defeat

The Afghanistan war, the longest in American history, should have ended one year after it began in 2001. It was clear that the Taliban's initial defeat was temporary and that they would return to reclaim their inherent right to the millennium-old land of their ancestors.

The United States' efforts to establish a democracy, coupled with a mounting build-up of American troops and escalating cost, bore little fruit. The Taliban relentlessly maintained their counter-offensive and, irrespective of their heavy losses, re-established their central role.

Under any negotiated agreement, the Taliban will eventually take over. All that the United States can do is require the Taliban to fully adhere to human rights, and punish any violations with crippling punitive sanctions. There are certainly many other countries in the Middle East and North Africa suffering from political instability, daunting economic hardship, violence, uncertainty and fear. Sadly, the efforts that have been made by the UN, EU, and the United States to quell or resolve many of these conflicts—be they in Lebanon, Libya, South Sudan and many other countries—have largely failed.



generation of leaders can rise and try in earnest to resolve many of these conflicts humanely, passionately and equitably to ensure their durability. ■

At the present time, it seems outrageous to speak out on behalf of a new multilateral institution. The current trend is moving in the opposite direction, with so-called "strong men" around the world propagating a return to the rule of the strong over the weak. To these populists, this means that international rules-based agreements, as well as the institutions that uphold and enhance them, have become obsolete. The so-called 'elite', in turn, paralyzes the institutions through stagnation and thus indirectly underpins the populists' assertion that these multilateral institutions are of no use to "average people."

The European Union is being weakened by political forces driving the alliance's demise from within, for example from within Parliament. NATO, too, is in crisis. French President Emmanuel Macron diagnosed it as suffering from "brain death"; he was vehemently contradicted. But the conflict has revealed a lack of agreement about the present and future of the defence alliance. Both confederations, NATO and the EU, were created during the Cold War. They reflect the spirit and conflict of that time in their structure and in the narrative that holds them and their members together. The United Nations has also been affected by the end of the bipolar world. The current dividing lines no longer run between the free and communist worlds, but between countries whose order is based on the recognition of human rights and those in which these same human rights are constantly being trampled on. Currently, there are three countries that can accurately be described as part of the central system of world power – the United States of America, the Russian Federation and the Peoples Republic of China, three of the five Permanent members of the UN Security Council. In this global assembly, a country having a veto power in the UN Security Council can torpedo every constructive idea and demoralize all other actors who want to work well in the long term. These three great powers are engaged in a conventional Westphalian contest for power and influence in which formal institutions are of minimal importance, and informal institutions are difficult to maintain. Meanwhile, in other parts of the world, the attempt is made to move beyond the rule-based version of Westphalia that was set out in 1919 and has developed over the past 100 years to create a world that is more highly institutionalised, a world that could be termed an embryonic global polity. This global polity builds on the expansion of international organisations that took place post-1945, in particular is based

There is a common perception that the rule-based international order, largely designed during the Cold War, but re-fitted in the 1990s and 2000s, is now in real trouble. The institutions designed to support this order have failed the task with which they have been charged; the case is put that the management of great power relations has become increasingly difficult, to the point that it is no longer being attempted. On the other hand, some analysts welcome this decline, arguing that the rule-based order served the interests of the rich and powerful more than those of the poor and weak. It can also be argued that while the orderliness of the central system of power relations has deteriorated, new norms, new understandings of sovereignty and of the value of cooperation have also emerged in this period, creating an international order parallel to the great power system.



A New International World Order

The world has changed,
we need new global institutions

INTERNATIONAL

on an expanding international human rights regime, the development of international criminal law, and a commitment to cooperative solutions to common problems such as environmental degradation. In this world, sovereignty is redefined in terms of responsibility and a general responsibility to protect (R2P) is widely accepted. Looking at institutions in a formal, organisational sense, the European Union and the wider system of cooperation is at the heart of the global polity, but democratic governments in the Commonwealth, in South and Central America and in Africa are part of this world via their membership of bodies such as the International Criminal Court. Although Europe is at the heart of this world, and the European belief that all problems can be resolved via cooperative institutions is central, it is worth noting that some of the most powerful advocates of notions such as sovereignty as responsibility have been Africans, most obviously former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and UN bureaucrat and later South Sudanese Ambassador Francis Deng.

In many respects, this emerging global polity reflects the hopes of 1919 rather more accurately than institutions such as the League of Nations and the United Nations have done. The underlying assumption of this world, as in 1919, is that liberal democratic government is the norm and, echoing, but usually not referencing, the 'democratic peace' literature, that democracies will handle their common problems by pooling sovereignty and cooperating rather than by violence. This is meant to be a world governed by Law, not War. The extent of the world of the emerging global polity is not universal; apart from the three major powers, a number of other important countries in the non-Western world, such as India, Pakistan and Indonesia, remain committed to conventional views of sovereignty and are suspicious of R2P and the ICC, but the hope of advocates of the global polity has been that eventually these countries, and indeed the three great powers themselves, will come to see the wisdom of more extensive cooperation to solve global problems.

What we need today is a new institution, a union of all democracies that are already called "like-minded countries" in diplomacy, but which so far lack an official home base.

The people of Germany, Canada, New Zealand, South Korea, Mongolia, Uruguay and South Africa have more commonalities than differences between them. Their

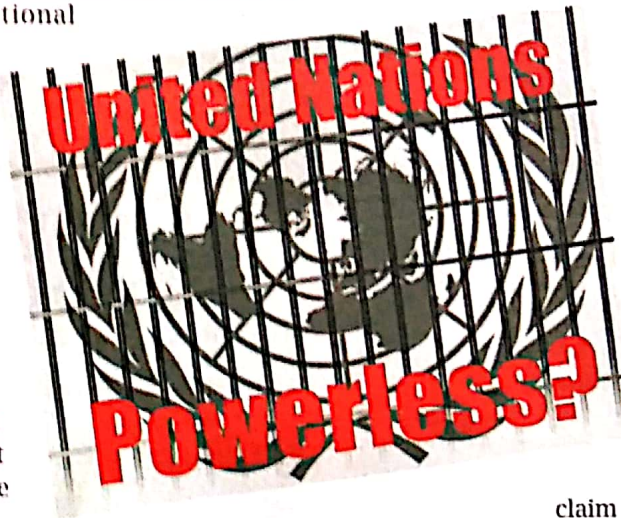
nation states rely on the recognition of human rights and on a legal system that is built on these rights. The legitimacy of these states is based precisely on this recognition of human freedom and its integrity. It is reflected in the view that everyone has civil and social rights.

Nationalists, who lament the loss of sovereignty, are getting it wrong. The subject of every constitution is the individual human being. In the liberal world order that we live in today, individual sovereignty has increased to an extent that our ancestors could not have imagined. As an

association of nation states, the EU in particular makes clear what is possible if laws built on a shared foundation and human rights recognized over time are harmonized. It is precisely the national characteristics, language, culture, religion and the way of life that do not fall by the wayside, but can exist on an equal footing with others and actually enrich coexistence. It is perhaps the greatest lie of the vociferous Brexit supporters to

claim that the break with the EU brings sovereignty back to the citizens of the United Kingdom. The opposite is the case: Many of their freedoms will be restricted again by their withdrawal.

So, in this context, it is important to maintain contact and dialogue with countries, e.g. Russia, Turkey and the People's Republic of China that do not recognize human rights and consequently torment their citizens. In the end, this contact over a long period of time will serve to free the



people in autocracies from the dark fist of their tormentors. The best way to achieve this is for democratic countries to have the best possible relations with one another, to learn from each other and, as an example, to convince others. It is time for such an institution. It is actually disastrous that it does not already exist. ■



Top 10 Geopolitical Trends of 2019

Aftab Abbasi

1. Europe's Populist Surge

In 2019, the rise of populism in Europe continued apace. France's Yellow Vest protesters returned to the streets throughout the year. They also inspired people in other countries throughout Europe and around the world. The populist struggle also advanced in Britain over Brexit, with pro-Brussels forces making numerous attempts to cancel Brexit or force another referendum, but all of their efforts failed. Another notable success for the populist trend was the parliamentary elections in Spain, where the rightist



Vox party more than doubled its seats and became the third most powerful party in the political arena.

2. Shiite Crescent Protests

In early October, Iraq witnessed the start of violent protests that eventually led to the resignation of Prime Minister Adil Abdul-Mahdi. Almost simultaneously with the Iraqi protests, massive demonstrations started in Lebanon that forced out Prime Minister Saad Hariri. On November 15, similar protests broke out in Iran after the



government introduced new quotas for gasoline and increased prices. The purpose of the ongoing protests in Iraq and Lebanon is to break the Shiite axis and deprive Iran of access to the Mediterranean Sea by overturning governments friendly to the Islamic Republic. Besides USA and Israel, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are also heavily invested in the protests in Iraq, having provided money to the rioters through their emissaries.

3. Turkey-Iran-Russia Nexus in Syria

The collaborative efforts of Turkey, Russia and Iran in



INTERNATIONAL

Syria through 2019 have been extremely successful. On September 16, the latest meeting of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Vladimir Putin and Hassan Rouhani took place in Ankara. By early October, Turkey had launched Operation Peace Spring in northeastern Syria against Kurdish separatist units. This operation was one of the results of Turkish-Russian agreements regarding the creation of a buffer zone near the Syrian-Turkish border in accordance with the 1998 Syrian-Turkish agreement in Adana. The Kurdish pseudo-state in eastern Syria ceased to exist, and the Kurds themselves were forced to negotiate with the government in Damascus. In December 2019, Operation Idlib Dawn began that is most likely to build Assad's control over a significant part of the province of Idlib.

4. Hong Kong Protests

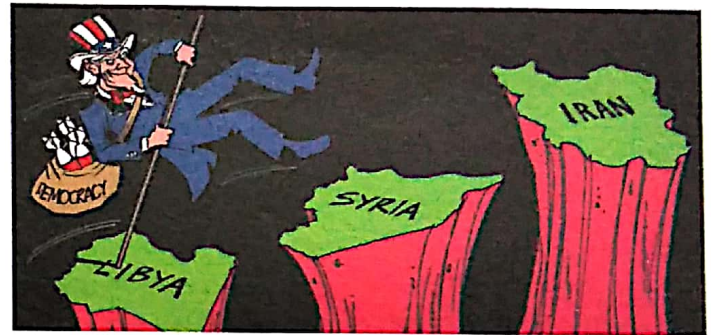
On May 15, mass protests began in Hong Kong which have continued ever since. Initially, the protests were directed against a proposed change to the territory's extradition

after Hong Kong authorities abolished the proposed changes, the protests did not stop. British and American authorities and media sources have provided strong public support to the protesters from the very beginning. The US sees the Hong Kong protests as a tool to put more pressure on China in the framework of the trade war.

5. US in the Middle East

Turkey's preparations for Operation Peace Spring forced the United States to begin withdrawing troops from Syria. The United States began to transfer troops from Syria to Iraq, leaving bases in areas where the Turkish operation was supposed to take place. However, following statements about the withdrawal from Syria, US authorities announced their intention to maintain control over the oil fields of this country. The US did withdraw a significant number of troops from Syria and relocated others to the southeast.

Coinciding with the troop decrease in Syria, the US



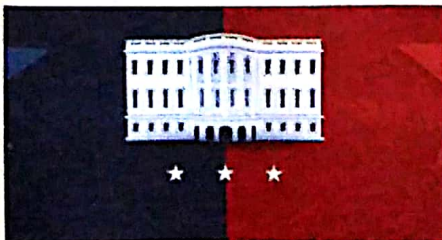
law, which would have allowed mainland China to extradite criminals who flee to Hong Kong. However, even

increased its military contingent in Saudi Arabia. In September, the Pentagon announced the deployment of

Top 10 Geopolitical Risks for 2020

1. Rigging in US Presidential Election

In 2020, US political institutions will be tested as never before, and the November election will

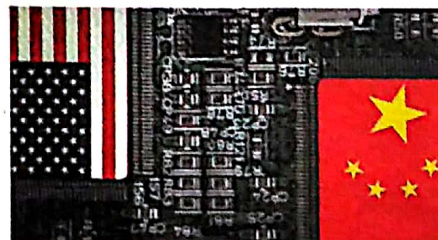


produce a result many see as illegitimate. If Trump wins amid credible charges of irregularities, the result will be contested. If he loses, particularly if the vote is close, same. Either scenario would create months of lawsuits and a political vacuum.

2. Tech Sector Decoupling

The decoupling of the US-Chinese tech sector is

already disrupting bilateral flows of technology, talent and investment. In 2020, it will move beyond strategic tech sectors like semiconductors, cloud computing and 5G into broader economic activity. This trend will affect



not just the \$5 trillion global tech sector, but other industries and institutions as well.

3. US-China Tensions

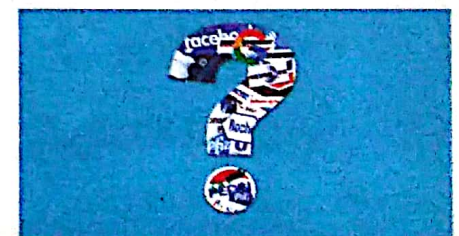
US-China tensions will provoke a more explicit clash over national security, influence and values. The two sides will continue to use economic tools in this struggle—sanctions, export controls and boycotts—with shorter fuses



and goals that are more explicitly political.

4. Peak MNCs

Far from filling the gaps on critical issues like climate change, poverty reduction and trade liberalization created by underperforming



an additional 3,000 troops to the country. In total, the number of US troops there has reached 14,000.

6. Kashmir

Over the year, the situation in Kashmir remained tense. In August, New Delhi announced the abolition of state of Jammu and Kashmir and the creation of two union territories in its place. The changes resulted in a decrease in the territorial autonomy of Kashmir and the abolition of the special status of the territory, which was previously prescribed in the Constitution of India. This provoked



heavy protests from Pakistan and the local Muslim population in the Indian-Occupied Kashmir. This issue is far from solved, and it seems like things will only heat up further in 2020.

7. Latin America

In 2019, countries through the Western Hemisphere were shocked by massive protests. Political crisis in Venezuela reached its climax when Washington-backed opposition forces refused to recognize the victory of Nicolas Maduro in the presidential election. In February, massive protests

broke out in Haiti, while July saw demonstrations taking place all across Puerto Rico, a US colony in the Caribbean. In October, leftist protests swept the Andes: Ecuador, Chile and Bolivia. In November 10, the Bolivian President, Evo Morales, announced his resignation and flew to Mexico, where he was granted political asylum. As a result of the presidential elections in Argentina in October, anti-American forces returned to power. Another centre of opposition to US hegemony could be Mexico, where the left-wing Manuel Lopez Obrador of the Labor Party came



to power in December. On the other hand, Brazil, led by Jair Bolsonaro, has become the stronghold of the pro-American right.

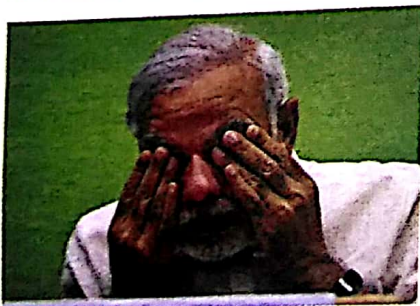
8. Libya

Throughout 2019, the civil war in Libya only intensified. On April 4, the head of Libyan National Army, Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, launched an offensive on Tripoli, where the Government of National Accord (GNA) is based. Haftar's forces have so far been unable to take the capital.

national governments, multinational corporations (MNCs) will face new pressures from political officials, both elected and unelected. Politicians working to manage slowing global growth, widening inequality, populist rivals and security challenges created by new technologies will assert themselves at the expense of MNCs.

5. Modi-fied India

After revocation of the special status for Jammu and Kashmir, stripping 1.9 million people of their



citizenship in Assam, and enacting the Citizenship Amendment Act, which considers

religious affiliation, protests of various kinds have expanded across India. But Modi is not likely to back down, and a harsh government response in 2020 will provoke more demonstrations.

6. Geopolitical Europe

European officials now believe the EU should defend itself more aggressively against competing economic and political models. On regulation, antitrust officials will continue to battle North American tech giants. On trade, the

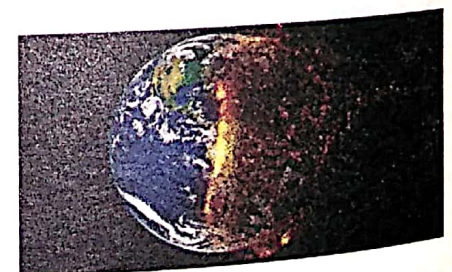


EU will become more assertive on enforcement

of rules and retaliatory tariffs. On security, officials will try to use the world's largest market to break down cross-border barriers to military trade and tech development. This more independent Europe will generate friction with both the US and China.

7. Politics vs. Economics of Climate Change

Climate change will put governments, investors and society at large on a collision course with



corporate decision-makers, who must choose between ambitious commitments to reduce their emissions and their bottom lines. Oil and gas firms, airlines, car makers and meat producers



Forces loyal to the GNA control the west of the country, while those of Haftar control the east and south. In December, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan signed two agreements with the head of the GNA, Fayez Sarraj, establishing Turkey's maritime boundaries with Libya and securing military assistance to the GNA. These agreements have paved the way for an increase in Turkey's military presence in Libya.

9. Trump's Impeachment

In the United States, the main political event of 2019 was likely the House of Representatives' decision to impeach President Donald Trump on December 18th. The president is accused of abusing power and obstructing the work of Congress. Although the Republican-controlled Senate will most likely vote against impeachment, the Republicans may find an opportunity to use the Senate process to interrogate Democrats: primarily regarding Joe Biden and his son Hunter. This could allow them to hurt the ratings of one of Trump's main competitors in the 2020 election.



10. The End of the INF Treaty

In 2019, the INF Treaty was terminated. The termination of the Treaty has very serious implications for the global arms control system. At this point, nothing is stopping Russia or the United States from creating and deploying such missiles, including nuclear equipment, in Europe, the Middle East and Asia. The security of Europe and the Middle East is at grave risk. **[5]**



will feel the heat. Disruption to supply chains is a meaningful risk.

8. Shia Crescendo

The failure of US policy toward Iran, Iraq and Syria—the major Shia-led nations in the Middle



East—creates significant risks for regional stability. These include a lethal conflict with Iran; upward pressure on oil prices; an Iraq caught between Iran's orbit and state failure, and Syria fused to Russia and Iran. Deadly skirmishes inside Iraq between US and Iranian troops are likely. Iran may also use its proxies in other Middle East countries to target US citizens and

allies.

9. Discontent in Latin America

In 2020, public anger over sluggish growth, corruption and low-quality public services will



keep the risk of political instability in Latin America high. We will see more protests, fiscal balances will deteriorate, anti-establishment politicians will grow stronger, and election outcomes will be less predictable.

10. Turkey

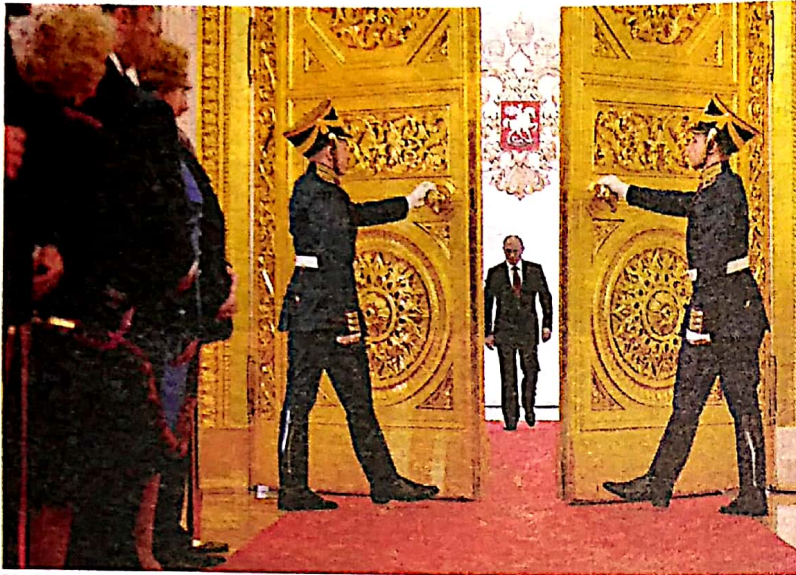
President Erdogan has entered a period of steep

political decline. He is suffering defections from the ruling Justice and Development Party as popular former allies establish new parties. His ruling coalition is shaky. Relations with the US



will hit new lows as likely US sanctions take effect in the first half of this year, undermining the country's reputation and investment climate and putting further pressure on the lira.

GENERAL



Since he was elected president for the fourth time in 2018, Moscow's political insiders have gossiped about who Vladimir Putin would choose to succeed him to run Russia. On January 15, he definitively answered that question: he chose himself. In his 70-minute state of the nation address, Mr Putin made some bold proposals about changing the Russian constitution. With this unexpected move, he ushered in a new political cycle which will culminate in the rearrangement of the power vertical after he steps down as president in 2024 (or even before that). He may not have gone as far as Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who is now in effect "president for life," but he made it clear that the man who has already run Russia for 20 years has more decades left in the tank—regardless of what job title he might have.

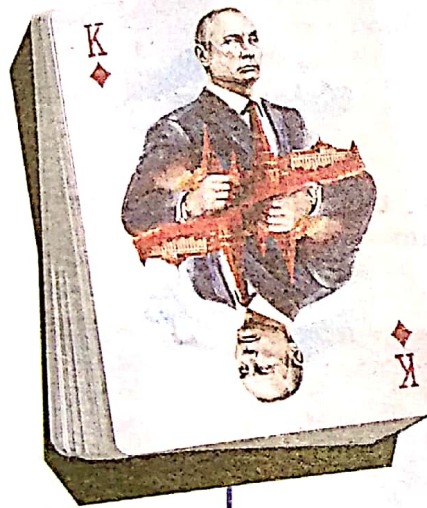
Putin isn't Going Anywhere

It's hard for strongmen to retire

Ansar Hafeez

There was no lack of warning about the intentions of Vladimir Putin, Russia's longest-serving leader since Stalin. A generation that has grown up knowing nothing but his rule now looks forward to its indefinite perpetuation. The resignations of the prime minister, Dmitry Medvedev, and the cabinet, may have taken even some of the ministers in question by surprise, as did the sweeping constitutional reforms the president proposed. But the unexpected aspect was the timing and the nature of his move. That he planned to hold on to power after 2024 was largely taken for granted. For one thing, Putin has form. Since Russian presidents are limited to two consecutive terms, he switched places with his prime minister for four years, allowing him to formally return in 2012. For another, it is hard for strongmen to retire, especially after two decades at the top. Putin, 67, needs to protect himself and his legacy. The issue is not only his immediate interests, but the survival of a system that could prove dangerously unstable without him, especially given the signs of power struggles within the elite. The risk is not only that a former ally might turn on him, but that the whole thing might come crashing down. The question is how to carry on without provoking a backlash. While Chinese president Xi Jinping simply abolished presidential term limits, Mr Putin still needs the facade of a mandate. In 2011, his announcement that he sought to return to the presidency, and the dubious parliamentary elections which followed, triggered mass

street protests. He clearly doesn't plan to repeat his old trick, since the reforms he proposed on 15th of January would weaken the presidency he has done so much to strengthen, and expand the power of the prime minister and parliament. There had already been speculation he might seek to emulate Kazakhstan's Nursultan Nazarbayev, who resigned as president last year but remained as chair of the country's Security Council and kept the title "Leader of the Nation". Putin's proposal to strengthen the status of the State Council lends some weight to that theory.



Stepping back from the top jobs might suit him. He prefers grand military and global affairs to the grind of domestic politics. His first decade saw soaring oil prices and an economic boom. These days, he contends with high youth unemployment and falling real incomes: hence his promise of additional support for families with children. The president's approval ratings hit a 13-year low last year. The lack of clarity over Mr Putin's exact plans may help to keep options open as well as to mute public reaction. By moving early, he has time to lay the groundwork symbol—finding a successor; pushing through some kind of referendum on reforms; effecting the right result in next year's legislative elections—and adjust as necessary. For both the president and elites, a new arrangement could prove more treacherous than the tried-and-trusted system. It would be foolish to bet against Mr Putin. But it would be naive to assume that he must remain unassailable forever. ■

Kamran Adil

Introduction

A new law is in the making. On 10th of January 2020, the National Assembly passed 'The Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020'. It is likely to be passed from the Senate, and will ultimately get its assent from the President before it becomes the law check. The said law deals with very important subject of child protection. It deserves understanding before its implementation is evaluated. The instant write-up will state the characteristic features of the law and will then briefly analyze its implications and effects.

Origin

On 4th January 2018, a five-year-old girl Zainab was raped and killed in Kasur district of Punjab. The incident resulted in unprecedented hue and cry despite the fact that it was not the first and only type of incident of its kind. The whole nation reacted strongly against the tragedy. Media led the movement and kept fuelling attention to the ghastly act. Resultantly, in addition to bringing the culprit to justice, the incident initiated a debate to improve the old legal framework dealing with cases of children. The debate brought in discussion about AMBER Alert—an acronym for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response system. Americans had

named the system after a nine-year-old girl Amber Hagerman from Texas, the United States. Zainab became a victim of crime of murder after abduction. The origin of the law may be borrowed from the United States but is the outcome of similar human tragedy.

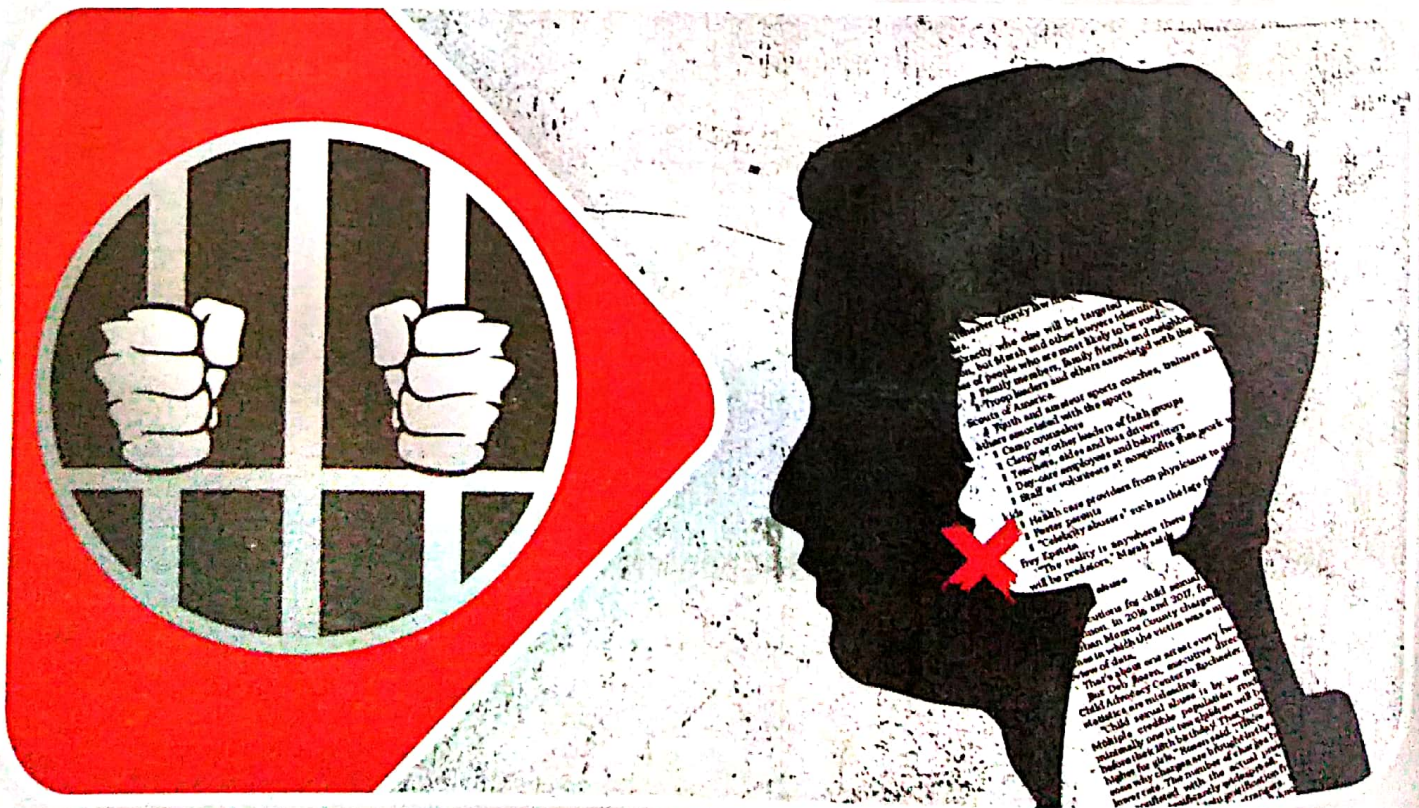
Characteristic Features

The draft law, in its present form, is limited in its application and proposes to amend the substantive and procedural criminal law of Pakistan. The law may be summarized through the following points that are characteristic in nature:

1. Scope of the Law

The law is limited in its application. It is applicable to the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) only, and is not applicable to all the four provinces. The limited approach has been taken due to the abolishing of the concurrent list from the Constitution. An alternative view is that the law should have been extended to whole of Pakistan by extending it the benefit of Article 142 of the Constitution that treats the criminal law, the criminal procedure and evidence and concurrent subjects of legislation. There is a strong case to do so in the domain of human rights especially in view of the international law obligations undertaken by Pakistan in various human rights-related

The Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Act, 2020



NATIONAL

Powers and Functions of ZARRA

1. To activate Zainab alerts, when there is a missing or abducted child, at the Federal Capital level, which shall include information on the physical characteristics of the missing or abducted child as well as any other data that would help in the child's identification, so as to inform the public at large and all concerned agencies to whom these alerts shall be issued.
2. To coordinate with Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) for issuance of Zainab alert SMS, MMS, with Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) for tickers on television channels and announcements on radio stations and alerts on social media as well as postings on relevant websites or online, print media or any other available medium to report abductions.
3. To define procedures for how, when, with what frequency and in which geographical territory the missing or abducted child alert shall be raised.
4. To provide nation-wide telephonic toll-free hotline number 1099 or such other number where any person may report a missing or abducted child and number may be used by any member of public who has any information relating to the missing or abducted child.
5. To maintain online data base both in ZARRA and Division concerned and of every reported incident of a missing or abducted child, the actions taken, the current status of the case and its final outcome. This database shall be monitored for accuracy and shall be kept updated at all times. 'the database shall cover all territories of ICT and shall be accessible to public on ZARRA website in English and in Urdu.
6. To maintain proper record for each case, coordinate any information on missing children with local law-enforcement agencies, detect criminal patterns in a geographical area, issue monthly public reports on missing and abducted children on its website, introduce procedures and key performance indicators that will improve and measure the effectiveness of ZARRA.
7. To facilitate the provision of legal aid or advice, where circumstances so require, coordinate and cooperate, in case of missing or abducted child who has been wrongfully removed to, or retained in, Pakistan, with the concerned authorities of the country where the child was habitually residing; and to do any other task necessary to perform the functions of ZARRA.

international treaties like the Convention for the Protection of Children, 1989.

2. ZARRA

The law proposes the establishment of Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency of Missing and Abducted Children (ZARRA). The Agency will be headed by a Director-General to be appointed by the Prime Minister. The Agency will be essentially coordinating with other agencies like police to bring about the desired results. It will measure the problem of missing and abducted children by maintaining a database and by using the helpline, i.e. 1099. It is expected to work closely with the National Commission on the Rights of the Child (NCRC), established under the National Commission on the Right of the Child Act, 2017.

3. Complementary Nature of the Law

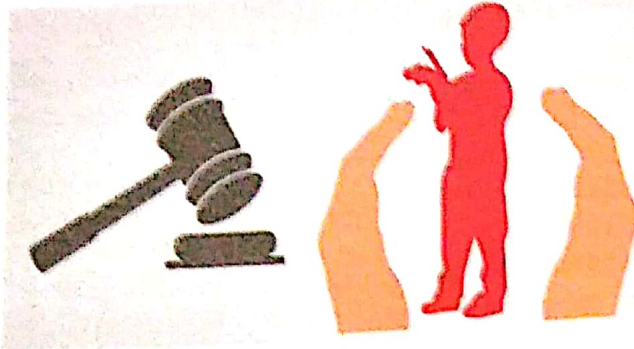
The draft law is not a stand-alone legislation; it is complementing another law styled as the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Protection Act, 2018. The supervision of the work of the ZARRA has been vested in the Advisory Board constituted under the ICT Child Protection Act, 2018.

4. Police and ZARRA

The draft law devotes as many as three provisions underscoring the importance of policing function in child-related cases.

First, the local police are duty-bound to inform every case of missing child or abduction to ZARRA. They are required to do so by filling in a prescribed form; Second, the local police are required to keep providing latest status of the case to ZARRA;





has been put on the police to report the matter without taking into account the legal duties in other statutes. Likewise, the difference of abduction and kidnapping, long kept in the jurisprudence, has been confounded without repealing the offences contained in Pakistan Penal Code. The laws related to children have often remained unimplemented. For example, the Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018, and the ICT Child Protection Act, 2018, have not been made fully functional. The police are the coercive arm of the law, and besides

Punishments under Zainab Alert Law

Kidnapping or abducting a person under the age of eighteen years

1. The act says that whoever kidnaps or abducts any person under the age of eighteen years in order that such person may be murdered or subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery, rape, or that such person may be so disposed of as to be put in danger of being murdered or subjected to grievous hurt, or slavery or rape shall be punished with imprisonment for life or with rigorous imprisonment which may extend to fourteen years but shall not be less than ten years.

2. Whoever kidnaps or abducts any child under the age of eighteen years with the intention of taking dishonestly any movable property from the possession of such child, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to fourteen years, and with a fine of one million rupees.

Procedure for the information which relates to the commission of abduction or missing child

In respect of the information which relates to the commission of offence of abduction or missing child, an officer in charge of a police station shall compulsorily reduce it to writing by him or under his direction and be read over to the informant and every such information, whether given in writing or reduced to writing as aforesaid, shall be signed by the person giving it and the substance there shall be entered in a book to be kept by such officer and also ensure that the required information, is made part of the complaint.

Completion of trial

The trial under this Act shall be completed within three months.

Third, the omission on the part of police officers to record a report (First Information Report) has been criminalized and has been held punishable under the law.

5. Enhancement of Punishments

The draft law proposes to enhance punishments related to the offences of kidnapping and abduction of children. The harsher punishments have been done by inserting new offences instead of amending the extant offences.

Analysis

The law is not the first and the last legislation on the rights of the children in the country. There are already more than a dozen laws on the statute book that claim to protect the rights of the children. The obligation of the state of Pakistan under international law, especially the Convention on the Rights of Children and other human rights-related instruments, also fortify the responsibility to protect the children. The problem, however, is that despite robust legislation, no separate resources are dedicated. For instance, in the draft legislation, the onus



criminal law, there must be solutions within the social continuum that may be used to help and protect children, which have not been fully developed. Criminalizing police duties has been the trend in most of the latest pieces of legislation without stocktaking the reasons for non-performance of the duties by police. For example, the law has almost diminished the difference between missing and kidnapping of children by treating both in the same manner. The approach needs careful examination as there are many a case where the children run out of the houses and teenage boys and girls elope, and declaring such acts as crimes might have unintended consequences. Anyhow, on the preventive side, the law may contribute by making police more responsive to such complaints in future. ■

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Inflows of foreign investment into Pakistan during the current fiscal have been quite impressive. The Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Pakistan surged to US \$850 million in July-November (2019-20) as compared to the investment of \$477.3 million recorded during the same period a year ago, showing a growth of 78.1 percent. In total, the foreign investment in the country surged by 1,267 percent to \$2.006 billion in July-November this year as compared to the investment of \$146.7 million during same period of last year, according to the data released recently by State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). A substantial increase in FDI during the first five months of FY20 is, of course, a very positive development for the country and is a strong reflection of growing confidence of foreign investors in the resilience and soundness of Pakistan's economy. It also raises a hope that Pakistan's economy will soon be stable and its benefits will also trickle down to the masses.

Foreign Direct Investment

Economic Hope for Pakistan

Hira Batool

Pakistan's economy has seen several swings over the past few years. The PTI government rode to victory on the cry of economic reforms and their performance therein became the litmus test to gauge the competency of this newborn government. Initially, the economy suffered several shocks and so did the psyche of the general populace. However, much to the chagrin of those who rejoiced when things looked grim, things are finally looking up.

For the first time in Pakistan's economic history, the number of tax filers has increased from 1.8 million to 2.6 million filers as the FBR shifted its focus from salaried individuals alone to wholesalers, and retailers to bring them into the tax net too—a step much delayed in the taking, but still appreciated by the economy. Trade deficit also decreased by a huge margin of 42%. Expert opinion states that Pakistan's consumption-driven economic growth model was not sustainable, and efforts are needed to build it on more solid grounds of investment and exports.

This export and investment-driven policy is at the heart of all economic and financial strategies of PM Imran Khan and his team. As economy has stabilized, Pakistan now needs to become ferocious in its foreign-investment drive. The appointment of Ali Jehangir Siddiqui, a foreign investment specialist, as Pakistan's Foreign Investment Ambassador-at-large, signifies that U-turns can turn out to be helpful.

Having served previously as Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Ali brings in established relations and a familiar face to American lobbyists and Wall Street investors. Connections that can not only bring in more investment but can be used as trust-building elements to entice other investment opportunities.

His ability to close deals without waiting for public appreciation seems to have paid off big time with Hong Kong's premier port operator, Hutchison Port Holdings, announcing a fresh \$240m investment in Pakistan, significantly increasing container terminal capacity at the Karachi port and bringing the company's total investment in the Pakistani economy to \$1 billion. This investment will also boost the capacity of the CPEC trade potential signifying increased growth potential for Pakistan.

In the light of this success, the government should continue strongly with its policy of engaging professionals well-versed in their

fields, who have international exposure and are committed to serving Pakistan. Things may not be great, and Pakistan may not win this economic match with a resounding sixer, but a victory of last run on the last ball will still be decisive enough.

As Pakistan cannot hope to make sufficient progress without adequate level of foreign investment, it is important for the policymakers to undertake necessary measures to improve its inflows significantly to play a much greater role in the development of the country. ■



NATIONAL

Policy to Bridge the Sales TAX Gap

Sales tax is the most significant source of Pakistan's budgetary revenue. In 2017-18, total sales tax collection on goods and services was Rs. 1,715 billion. However, the sales tax gap, which is the difference between the actual tax collection and the amount that would have been collected if every taxpayer was fully compliant, is an enormous threat to government finances.

Bilal Hassan



There could be numerous reasons or factors responsible for this sales tax gap. Generally, the source of sales tax gap could be attributed to exemptions, concessions, reduced rates, zero rates on domestic supplies and some other deviations from the standard sales tax policy. Sales tax revenue losses, as a result, are attributed to tax policy gap. The other sources of this gap are attributable to weaknesses in the tax-enforcement mechanism. The tax authorities are not always successful in tracing potential taxable persons and to get them registered for the purpose of sales tax. The potential taxable persons are also reluctant to get themselves registered under the sales tax statute for one reason or another. More importantly, the tax authorities do not possess enough resources to identify registered taxpayers who are underreporting taxable supplies or claiming input tax on fake and flying invoices, and, hence, remitting less than due tax to the national exchequer.

The estimated loss of sales tax revenue due to sales tax exemptions and related expenditures during 2018-19 was Rs. 598 billion—about 4.4% of GDP of Rs. 13,570 billion. More importantly, tax expenditures tend to reduce tax base and make tax system non-neutral among agents of economy, add complexity to the tax system and tend to increase compliance costs and risks for businesses and increase cost of collection to tax authorities and cost of compliance to registered taxpayers.

A special scheme in the form of zero rating for manufacturers, exporters, importers and wholesalers (but not retailers) operating in five designated sectors, including textile, carpet, leather, sport and surgical, remained enforced from 31 December 2011 until 30 June 2019, though in different versions.

Although standard sales tax rate is 17%, reduced sales tax rate remains applicable on different domestic supplies as well as imports, such as 2% on supplies of fertilizers, 5% on agricultural machineries and capital goods for transmission line projects, 7% on the importation of seven types of poultry machinery, including machinery for preparing

feeding stuff, incubators, brooders, insulated sandwich panes, poultry sheds, evaporative air cooling systems and evaporative cooling pads, 8% on white crystalline sugar, 10% on soybean meal, plant and machinery not locally manufactured, cheese, butter and ingredients for poultry and cattle feed, 12% on import of LNG/RLNG and on supply of RLNG and 16% on the supply of rapeseed, sunflower seed and canola seed when imported by solvent extraction industries, etc.

Similarly, apart from exports, zero rating is allowed on numerous other goods. Some of the domestic supplies and imports subjected to zero rate included cotton seeds and oil, plant, machinery and equipment, uncooked poultry meat, milk and cream, trucks and dumpers, vessels for breaking up, and polyethylene and polypropylene for the purpose of local manufacturing of mono filament yarn and net cloth, etc.

Effective from 1st July 2019, legislative changes in the sales tax statute have been introduced through the Finance Act of 2019 to make sales tax system broad, essential for revenue mobilization throughout the production chain, to make it uniform for all sectors of economy and all taxable persons, to ensure neutrality so as all goods face the same level of tax regardless of where they are manufactured and to enhance efficiency by reducing cost of tax collection and tax compliance.

Some of the legislative changes aiming at reducing the sales tax gap are provided hereunder:

A. The definition of cottage industry is amended to mean a manufacturing concern that fulfils each of the following conditions:

1. doesn't have an industrial gas or electricity connection;
2. is located in a residential area;
3. does not have a total labour force of more than 10 workers; and
4. annual turnover from all supplies does not exceed PKR 3 million.

B. All Tier-1 retailers have been required to integrate their retail outlets with FBR's computerized system for real-time reporting of sales. The Finance Act provided that in case a

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Tier-1 retailer does not integrate his retail outlet in the prescribed manner, the adjustable input tax for a tax period shall be reduced by 15%. Tier-1 retailers include:

- (a) a retailer operating as a unit of a national or international chain of stores;
- (b) a retailer operating in an air-conditioned shopping mall, plaza or centre, excluding kiosks;
- (c) a retailer whose cumulative electricity bill during the immediately preceding 12 consecutive months exceeds PKR 600,000;
- (d) a wholesaler-cum-retailer, engaged in bulk import and supply of consumer goods on wholesale basis to the retailers as well as on retail basis to the general body of the consumers; and
- (e) a retailer whose shop measures 1,000 square feet or more in area.

C. National Tax Number (NTN) or Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) is now required to be mentioned in tax invoice in respect of supply to unregistered persons. Such requirements have been made effective from 1 August 2019. However, an exception from such requirement has been introduced for supplies made by a



retailer where the transaction value inclusive of sales tax does not exceed PKR 50,000, if sale is being made to an ordinary consumer. The term 'Ordinary Consumer' has also been explained in the Finance Act as a person who is buying goods for his own consumption and not for the purpose of re-sale or processing. In case, it is subsequently proved that CNIC provided by the purchaser was not correct, liability of tax or penalty shall not arise against the seller, in case of bona fide sale;

D. Pursuant to SRO 694(I)/2019 of 29 June 2019, the FBR has rescinded SRO 68(I)/2006 of 28 January 2006 (entitlement to the solvent extraction industries to deduct the entire amount of input tax paid on import of rapeseed from the output tax charged on supply of oil extracted); SRO 480(I)/2007 of 9 June 2007 (Sales Tax Special Procedures Rules 2007); SRO 660(I)/2007 of 30 June 2007 (the Sales Tax Special Procedure (Withholding) Rules 2007); SRO 769

(I)/2009 of 4 September 2009 (Zero-rating of polyethylene and polypropylene for the purpose of local manufacturing of mono filament yarn and net cloth); SRO 1125(I)/2011 of 31 December 2011 (Zero-rating of major export-oriented sectors); SRO 398(I)/2015 of 8 May 2015 (providing reduced rate of 5% on LNG imported for servicing CNG sector and fertilizer produced by using imported LNG);

E. All Sales Tax General Orders (STGOs) granting zero-rating on supply of electricity, gas, diesel, furnace oil and coal have been rescinded via STGO 100/2019 of 29 June 2019; and

F. Pursuant to SRO 698(I)/2019 of 29 June 2019, the FBR has implemented automated system of sales tax registration by amending sub-rules (2) to (9) of Rule 5 of the Sales Tax Rules 2006 (STR). Under the amended STR:

(a) an applicant having national tax number or income tax registration will be able to login to the online system and

will require to upload the following information and documents: bank account certificate issued by the bank in the name of the business; registration or consumer number with the gas and electricity supplier; particulars of all branches in case of multiple branches at various locations; GPS-tagged photographs of the business premises; and in case of a manufacturer, also the GPS-tagged photographs of machinery and

industrial electricity or gas meter installed. Upon furnishing above documents, the system will register the applicant for sales tax, which is a prerequisite for: filing sales tax returns; issuing sales tax invoices; and claiming tax credit or refund.

(b) After registration, the applicant or an authorized person will have to visit a National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA)'s e-Sahulat centre within a month for biometric verification. In case of failure to visit or failure of biometric verification, the registered person's name shall be taken off the sales tax Active Taxpayer List (ATL). Under Rule 12A of the STR, a non-active taxpayer shall not be entitled to file goods declarations for import or export; issue sales tax invoices; claim input tax or refund; or avail any concession under the Sales Tax Act 1990 or STR. Moreover, no person shall make any purchases from non-active taxpayer and no input tax credit shall be admissible on the strength of invoices issued by such taxpayer.

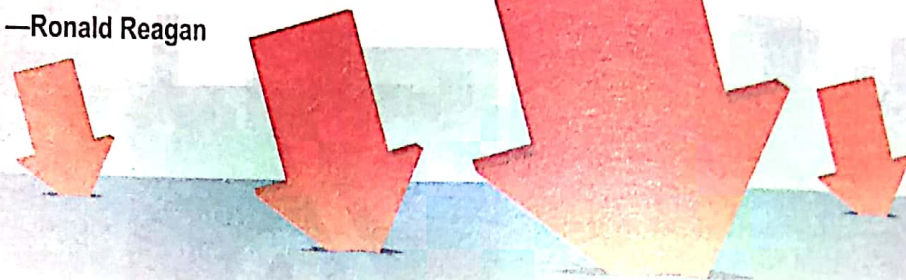
(c) in case of a manufacturer, the FBR may require post verification through field offices or an authorized third party. In case, the field office, during post-registration scrutiny, finds that any document provided is not genuine or is fake or wrong, it may request through the system to provide the missing document within 15 days, failing which the registered person shall be removed from the sale tax ATL. ■

The writer serves as Additional Director of Intelligence and Investigation (IR), Federal Board of Revenue.

Reflections on Pakistan's Economy

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it."

—Ronald Reagan



Zohaib Ahmed Anjum (PAS)

In the middle of the last year, Pakistan entered into a \$6bn bailout arrangement with International Monetary Fund (IMF) under a 39-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF). This was the twenty-first loan that Pakistan sought from IMF to shore up its dwindling reserves, and to avoid an economic crunch. The

state of Pakistan's economy has been in shambles as the country was battling to stave off an economic crisis. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance, made the announcement, "So Pakistan will get \$6bn from the IMF and in addition we will get \$2 to \$3 billion from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank in the next three years." Pakistan has outstanding foreign loan in excess of \$90bn and the country's exports sector has plunged over the past five years. The national economy is still going through structural adjustment phase. By far, things appear grimmer and prospects shadier. Under its readjustment bid, the government realigned exchange rate, revised interest rates upwards, escalated energy prices and put a cap on public sector develop-

ment expenditures, resulting in overall stalled economic growth. No doubt, the aim of these adjustments was to control the genie of twin deficits. Government discouraged increased consumption-led growth by containing demand through import compression. This helped in stabilizing current account deficit but its unintended fallout was hyper-inflation, resulting in loss of value of Pakistani rupee. As a result, GDP growth constricted to the lowest in the past nine years.

Due to the impending threat of burgeoning twin deficits by the end of 2018, Pakistan started tightening its monetary policy. In the beginning of FY19, the government rescheduled its priorities to control the twin deficits and precarious level of foreign exchange reserves. One mistake that Pakistan committed was the delayed agreement with IMF—the delay created much ill-founded suspicion and scepticism among investors who were already shying away due to failure of efforts for internal stabilization. Government took several measures to curtail imports but this was not enough as overall reserves remained



quite low and financing external obligations became a Herculean task. Sensing its mistake, the government approached IMF for another EFF. This arrangement helped Pakistan to attract foreign investors and international financial institutions (IFIs), as well as in raising funds from international capital markets.

Most significant departure from the previous government's policies was a substantial cut in PSDP (public sector development programme) spending. No mega infrastructure project was taken up by provinces, and four provinces jointly supplied a whopping cash surplus of Rs. 202 billion to the centre in December 2019. Government's efforts at tax reforms could not materialize and government had to revisit its revenue target from PKR 5.5 trillion to PKR 5.2 trillion—it still seems a distant dream, though. Weak collection from typical revenue-generators pushed government to overly rely on non-tax revenues.

The story in expenditure sector was not much different;

Table 1.1: Selected Macroeconomic Indicators

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	
				Target	Actual
Percent Growth					
Real DGP	4.6	5.2	5.5	6.2	3.3
Agriculture	0.2	2.2	3.9	3.8	0.8
Industry	5.7	4.6	4.9	7.6	1.4
Services	5.7	6.5	6.2	6.5	4.7
Private Sector Credit	11.2	16.8	14.9	-	11.6
CPI Inflation	2.9	4.2	3.9	6.0	7.3
Percent of DGP					
Current a/c Balance	-1.7	-4.1	-6.3	-4.0	-4.8
Fiscal Balance	-4.6	-5.8	-6.6	-4.9	-8.9
Gross public debt	67.6	67.0	72.1	68.0	84.8

Data Sources: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, SBP and Finance

despite much-touted austerity and PSDP cuts, growth in overall expenditures remained high due to a substantial increase in interest payments. This resulted in deterioration of primary deficit while an increase in overall fiscal deficit.

Throughout FY19, the economy witnessed a steady increase in headline inflation which was further compounded by government's decision to increase energy prices to control fiscal deficit. Prices of food as well as non-food items (NFIs) also rose, constraining the basket of goods of common purchaser.

Real GDP growth picked up during FY17 and FY18; however, the sharp decline in GDP growth in FY19 exposed the un-sustainable economic strategies upon which this artificial DGP growth was based. Low real GDP growth, high level of fiscal deficit and increased inflation reflect fundamental structural deficiencies in Pakistan's

taxation system. Overall exports during FY19 showed a substantial growth but overall value of exports decreased.

Annual report (2018-19) on State of Pakistan's Economy,



released by State Bank of Pakistan, presents a dismal picture. The report highlights that structural imbalances and gaps have been building over time especially increasing share of services in GDP which does not add to export base. The report warrants that for structural adjustments measures like restoration of commodity-producing sectors, increasing competitiveness of Pakistani goods in domestic and international markets, increasing product quality, diversifying market trends, facilitation of incremental shift towards exportable services and increased improvement in human capital and productivity, are needed. It suggests that provision of quality education, health and vocational training should be given priority.

In FY19, growth in real DGP decelerated to 3.3 percent, compared to 5.5 percent in FY18, due to rapid decline in commodity-producing sector. In agriculture, growth stalled due to below-par performance of major crops

Table 1.2: Key Macroeconomic Targets and Projections

	FY19	FY20	
		Target	SBP Projections
Percent Growth			
Real GDP	3.3	4.0	3.0-4.0
CPI (average)	7.3	8.5	11.0-12.0
Billion US\$			
Remittances	21.8	24.0	22.5-23.5
Exports	24.2	26.2	25.4-25.9
Imports	52.4	53.7	49.8-50.0
Percent of GDP			
Fiscal deficit	8.9	7.1	6.5-7.5
Current a/c deficit	4.8	3.0	2.5-3.5

Data Sources: Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission, SBP, Annual Plan 2019-20, Planning Commission

especially in Sindh, a problem aggravated by low water availability. Growth in industrial sector also slumped due to a slowdown in construction industry.

Inflation during FY19 was fuelled by increased demand, administered prices and depreciation of rupee. Headline Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation reached 7.3 percent during FY19, compared to 3.9 percent in FY18. The overall budget deficit during FY19 stood at 8.9 percent of GDP against the set target of 6.8 percent in the Budget 2018-19. This deficit was due to sharp decline in revenue collection and a steep rise in current expenditures. Data provided by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) shows that overall revenues plunged by 6.3 percent during FY19 due to reduction in non-tax revenues.

Debt sector dynamics depicted poor performance of economy. Pakistan's total debt and liabilities reached PKR 40.2 trillion by end FY19. The share of long-term debt in total domestic debt rose from 45.8 percent a year earlier to 73.4 percent in FY19. However, good news came from external sector where current account gap narrowed substantially in FY19. Strict regulations, growth in worker remittances, import reduction, completion of CPEC early harvest projects, and lower PSDP spending contributed towards decrease in machinery import which contributed to the decline in import payments. This, in turn, helped stabilize external sector. Worker

remittances increased record high with increase coming from US, UK, KSA and Malaysia. In the second half of 2019, Pakistan pursued its struc-



tural adjustment bid under IMF conditionalities associated with bailout package. With new bailout, IMF made sure Pakistan follows macroeconomic stabilization. State Bank of Pakistan continued to keep consistent monetary policy. On the fiscal front, government continued its efforts to increase revenues and decrease expenditures. It implemented system of market-based exchange rate.

Government started documentation process of the economy including assessment of assets, financial scrutiny over bank accounts and payments flows, and introduction of structured mechanisms to formalize businesses' value chains. Though with the revision of taxation targets and due to resistance from traders and merchants, the impact of these efforts is not easy to be gauged at this time. Current economic crisis has inflicted much pain on ordinary Pakistani. However, this latest spate of economic pain would not last for too long. Given government's tight fiscal and monetary policies, structural adjustment bids, documentation process and improved revenue collection, it is hoped that dawn of economic prosperity and end of economic peril is not too far away. ■

"Hope is the beacon which points to prosperity."

—Edward Counsel

Table 1.3: Economic Indicators

	FY19	Q1-FY19	Q1-FY20
Growth rate (percent)			
Large Scale Manufacturing	-3.9	-0.6	-5.9
CPI	7.3	5.6	11.5
Private Credit	11.6	2.1	-0.3
Money supply	11.3	0.1	0.6
Exports	-1.1	4.2	2.5
Imports	-9.9	-0.04	-20.9
Policy rate spread (basic po	-6.6	-5.9	-11.9
FBR tax revenue (billion Rs	3828.5	832.3	959.1
Exchange rate	-24.1	-2.2	2.4
Million US dollars			
SBP's liquid reserves	7280.4	8408.7	7936.6
Workers remittances	21838.6	5557.6	5478.1
FDI in Pakistan	1668.0	559.4	542.1
Percent of GDP			
Current account deficit	-4.9	-5.5	-2.3
Fiscal Balance	-8.9	-1.4	-0.7
Primary balance	-3.5	-0.1	-0.6

Data Sources: PBS, SBP, MoF, FBR



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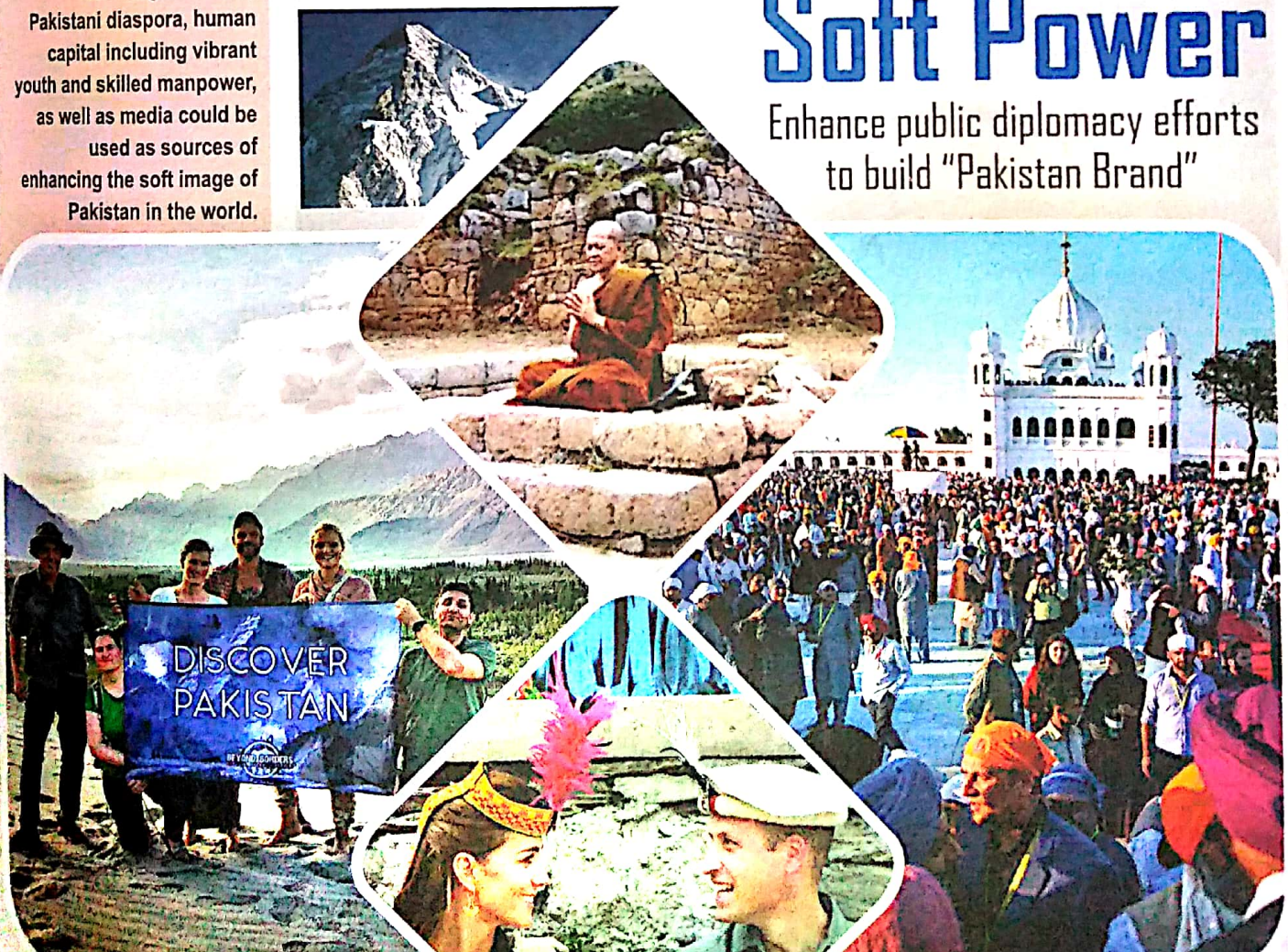
While geopolitical uncertainty and an eroding international order have been the dominant trends in today's world, the importance of soft power as a tool of foreign policy has remained constant. As Pakistan grapples with a volatile international political landscape and looks to adjust its foreign policy strategies accordingly, it will need to re-evaluate its current approach to generating and leveraging soft power. Pakistan needs formulating a well-calibrated strategy to project its soft power. The use of soft power should be a policy tool rather than a mere projection of a soft image. For this, Pakistani diaspora, human capital including vibrant youth and skilled manpower, as well as media could be used as sources of enhancing the soft image of Pakistan in the world.

In this anarchical world, the states continuously interact with each other in one way or another. Power is considered the lifeblood in international politics but in this globalized world, the concept and nature of power are in transition. According to Joseph S. Nye, the use of power today has shifted from an emphasis on hard power to a focus on soft power. Nowadays, the hard power and soft power go hand in hand. So, in order to maintain amicable relations with rest of the world, the countries need to have a superior image in the senses of the global community. While power is the capacity to direct the behaviour of others through any means necessary, 'soft power', a term first coined

by Joseph S. Nye Jr. in 1990, is essentially power without the use of coercion or force. When it comes to countries' soft power, Nye believes that it "rests primarily on three resources: its culture in places where it is attractive to others; its political value when it lives up to them at home and abroad; and its foreign politics when they are seen as legitimate and having moral authority". Soft power can translate into effective public diplomacy, i.e. the process whereby a country seeks to build trust and understanding by engaging with a broader foreign public beyond governmental relations. Pakistan appears to have very little soft power globally, which is usually achieved through public diplomacy efforts. This is due to a variety of reasons, disregarding the political imbroglios the country has

Projecting Pakistan's Soft Power

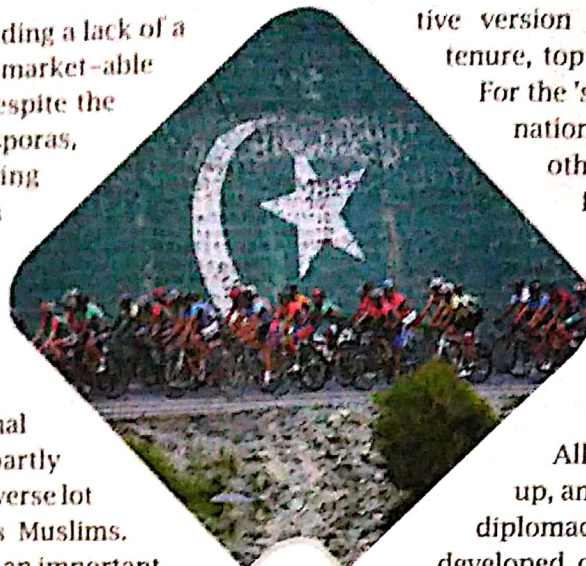
Enhance public diplomacy efforts to build "Pakistan Brand"



found itself in over the years, including a lack of a clear national brand and missing market-able public diplomacy assets. This is despite the existence of sizeable Pakistani diasporas, the world's lingua franca being Pakistan's 'official' language and a population of over 200 million diverse people from a plethora of cultures — all really potent ingredients for a powerful punch of soft power.

Pakistan has been lacking a national brand, and perhaps this is partly resulting from the fact that it is a diverse lot of ethnicities brought together as Muslims. While being Muslim is undoubtedly an important identity, what is the Pakistan brand?

An effective national brand is built on national values. National leaders set those values, and these priorities inform how the country is perceived abroad. Other Muslim countries are working hard to develop a national brand in addition to their religion. A good example is Turkey's leadership consistently valuing the country's Ottoman heritage and believing in the efficacy of humanitarian diplomacy. That has led to the development of public diplomacy products and programmes such as the internationally popular drama series *Diliris: Ertugrul* and the Turkish Cooperation and Coordination Agency, Turkey's official development assistance agency operating in 150-plus countries. Research studies have shown improving perceptions of the country in key regions. Unfortunately for Pakistan, the country's national values were dictated by changing political or military leadership every few years. For Gen Zia, Pakistan's national values were adherent to an ultraconserva-



tive version of Islam. During Gen Musharraf's tenure, top 40 tunes blared through car radios. For the 'socialist' prime minister Bhutto, rapid nationalisation was the way to go, while the other prime minister Bhutto introduced full-fledged liberalisation in the country in 1988. For prime minister Sharif, Basant was a no-no, and even though there were legitimate safety concerns, no effort was made to preserve Pakistan's cultural wealth.

All these national values got jumbled up, and so did Pakistan's brand. No public diplomacy products or programmes were developed or promoted in the post-Cold War period, when other countries realised the importance of generating global influence through soft power.

With Prime Minister Imran Khan, Pakistan is now witnessing another set of national values as he set Pakistan's agenda at the 2019 United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). It is a good opportunity for Pakistan to finally find its Goldilocks zone, its own distinctive voice.

Prime Minister Khan highlighted the significant human rights violations in occupied Kashmir; Pakistan's non-recognition of Israel until Palestine gets its due rights; its mindfulness of climate change; and its determined action against hate speech in collaboration with other Muslim countries. Pakistan has the opportunity to develop its brand on the foundation of these displayed values: humanitarianism, justice, environmentalism, modernity, and inclusivity. These national values can guide the focused development, coordination and promotion of relevant public diplomacy products and programmes for foreign audiences.

Top 10 Soft Powers in the World

Rank	Country	Score
1	France	80.28
2	Germany	77.41
3	Canada	75.89
4	Australia	72.03
5	Norway	71.05
6	United Kingdom	79.47
7	Switzerland	77.4
8	Netherlands	75.71
9	Italy	71.58
10	Finland	68.86

What is Soft Power?

The art of influencing others to follow, support and protect your required results through politics, foreign policy and culture can be termed as "soft power". A country may obtain the outcomes it wants in world politics because other countries - admiring its values, emulating its example, aspiring to reach its level of prosperity and openness - want to follow it. Soft power is considered the second face of power through which we can get the same outcome, i.e. maximization of power, without using arms and ammunition. It is not simply the ability or capacity to influence or inspire others, but it is the ability to attract, and attraction leads to acquiescence. Therefore, soft power rests on the ability to form, shape and design the preferences of others. Soft power comprises the contributions of governments and its citizens, as well as non-governmental actors, containing economic, political and cultural organizations and morals. Cultural institutions, prosperity and internet connectivity, democracy and foreign aid, and overall cultural ranking influence a country's international pull. The support of persuasive methods like mass media, film industry, tradition, fashion, internet, language, education can boost the country's soft power. These persuasive methods help to strengthen cross-border relationships and interconnectedness. Soft power works through comparatively less transparent and unseen channels, as well as through lobbying via powerful political and non-political organizations.

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Public Diplomacy

Alongside soft power, the modern world has experienced yet another concept, i.e. 'public diplomacy', which includes traditional diplomacy through private individuals and groups. Soft power phenomenon has various aspects but public diplomacy is the apex which executes the true requisites of soft power.

Public diplomacy, also known as people's diplomacy means a range of government-sponsored and non-government endeavours which aim at corresponding unwaveringly with the overseas public with the intention of convincing them and building a soft image for their own country. It is an instrument of soft power, which includes such activities as educational exchange programmes for scholars and students; visitor programmes; language training; cultural events and exchanges and radio and television broadcasting, etc. By such activities, the "displaying" country improves its image for a wider acceptance by the "receiving" country.

Numerous countries are employing public diplomacy in a befitting manner and even win battles with its help. It is said that the US successfully won the Cold War by the appropriate use of soft power and public diplomacy. Japan and China are also glaring examples. India, too, has ably developed the illusion of "Shining India" and "Make in India" through dexterous manoeuvring and smart policies, by soft power and public diplomacy. India through its "liberal democratic regime" has superiority over China in terms of global magnetism and power.

Pakistan, unfortunately, is faced with a lot of internal and external challenges which have thwarted its efforts to portray its real, soft image to the outer world. If we want to be considered a nation of peaceful, loving people, we need to make an apt use of soft power and public diplomacy with an aim to change the hearts, minds and views of the people of the world towards Pakistan.



bringing Pakistan's values and priorities closer to them, leading to greater influence worldwide.

Yes, Pakistan has wondrous mountains in the north, its *sofi* shrines shimmer at night and the country has a unique musical talent on display every new season of Coke Studio or Nescafe Basement. Why are multinationals

smart enough to profit from Pakistan's latent soft power, while the country itself faces international scepticism? Until Pakistan transforms it into public diplomacy products and programmes that effectively convey its values, the country's influence will remain stunted. Prime Minister Khan's UNGA performance was a good start, but the message has to continue uninterrupted for it to truly create positive impact. ■

France - The World's Top Soft Power

France's greatest soft power strengths continue to sit within its global engagement assets. It has a vast diplomatic network, and is unrivalled in its membership of multilateral and international organisations. France also boasts the highest number of diplomatic cultural missions via its extensive Alliance Française network, which will mark its centenary in 2020. France also has a rich cultural offering, with strong performances in the art, film, food, sport and tourism metrics. France has the highest number of Michelin-starred restaurants in the world, and French cuisine is recognised by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage. France is also home to cultural icons including the Eiffel Tower and the Louvre, as well as a multitude of museums, galleries and UNESCO World Heritage Sites. The Louvre remains the most visited museum in the world, so it is no surprise that France boasts the highest number of tourist arrivals in the world. When a devastating fire broke out at the Notre-Dame cathedral in April, there was an outpouring of support from both French citizens and the international community. The global response was a reminder of France's unique position as a touchstone for global culture and heritage, demonstrating the vast extent of France's global cultural resonance. The international appeal of French culture is also evidenced in events such as the Cannes Film Festival, the Tour de France, and Bastille Day, which are followed and celebrated by audiences around the world.

While the mainstays of French soft power have been developed over centuries and will continue to serve France well into the future, the real differentiating factor in France's first-place finish for 2019 was its improved performance in the international polling.



The 21st century has seen various worldwide movements gain momentum, with feminism being a prominent one. Women have faced countless cruel forms of institutionalized discrimination, in different cultural settings since time immemorial. This is an undeniable truth, making feminism — a movement seeking to create equality for women in the social, political, economic and occupational spheres — laudable. There is no moral reason behind not allowing a woman to vote, denying her equal access to education and healthcare, or not giving her equal pay for the same job as a man. Feminism has addressed these deeply sexist social injustices. This is what many qualify as compassionate feminism and identify with as well. What is feminism?

One of the major issues that have made headlines in Pakistan in the recent years is feminism. Though not a new concept, it is still an awkward word for many. Most Pakistanis criticize feminism for being a Western ideology. However, we must understand that feminism means same rights and status in society for women and men. It is true that men and women cannot be the same, but we need to re-evaluate and value both genders for the role they play in society, rather than crediting only men. We must also acknowledge that Pakistani women have a long history of high accomplishments which must never be forgotten or ignored.

Ghufran Wakeel
The term feminism describes political, cultural and economic movements that aim to establish equal rights and legal protections for women. Over time, feminist activists have campaigned for issues such as women's legal rights, especially in regard to contracts, property and voting; body integrity and autonomy; abortion and reproductive rights, including contraception and prenatal care; protection from domestic violence, sexual harassment and rape; workplace rights, including maternity leave and equal pay; and against all forms of discrimination women encounter.

Four Waves of Feminism

Some feminist scholars are moving away from "waves" since it can give the appearance that feminists aren't always actively fighting inequality. But if you see them, here's generally what they're referring to:

Exploring the Radical Notion of Feminism

It's about all genders having equal rights and opportunities



1. First wave feminism: Kicked off with the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention to discuss the "social, civil and religious condition of woman" and continued into the early twentieth century. It culminated in 1920 with the passage of the 19th amendment to the US Constitution, which gave women the right to vote, though some states made it difficult for women of colour to exercise this right until well into the 1960s.

2. Second wave feminism: It began in the 1960s and bloomed in the 1970s with a push for greater equality. Think Gloria Steinem, Dorothy Pittman Hughes, Betty Friedan. It was marked by huge gains for women in legal and structural equality.

3. Third-wave feminism: Beginning in the 1990s, it looked to make feminism more inclusive, intersectional and to allow women to define what being a feminist means to them personally.

Fourth-wave Feminism: Although debated by some, many claim that a fourth wave of feminism began about 2012, with a focus on sexual harassment, body shaming, and rape culture, among other issues. A key component was the use of social media to highlight and

standing and mandate from the Quran, seeking rights and justice within the framework of gender equality for women and men in the totality of their existence. Islamic feminism explicates the idea of gender equality as part and parcel of the Quranic notion of equality of all human beings and calls for the implementation of gender equality in the state, civil institutions and everyday life. It rejects the notion of a public/private dichotomy (by the way, absent in early Islamic jurisprudence, or fiqh) conceptualising a holistic umma in which Quranic ideals are operative in all spaces."

This is an important distinction. "Islamic feminism" is not simply a feminism that is born from Muslim cultures, but one that engages Islamic theology through the text and



address these concerns. The new wave arose amid a number of high-profile incidents. Birthed in the digital sphere, the Fourth Wave of feminism has been ridiculed for what has disparagingly been called Hashtag Feminism. But it is in this medium that the new wave acquired relevance, found its voice, and built momentum.

Feminism in Islam

Dr Margot Badran, a graduate of Al-Azhar University and Oxford University, defines "Islamic feminism" in the following words:

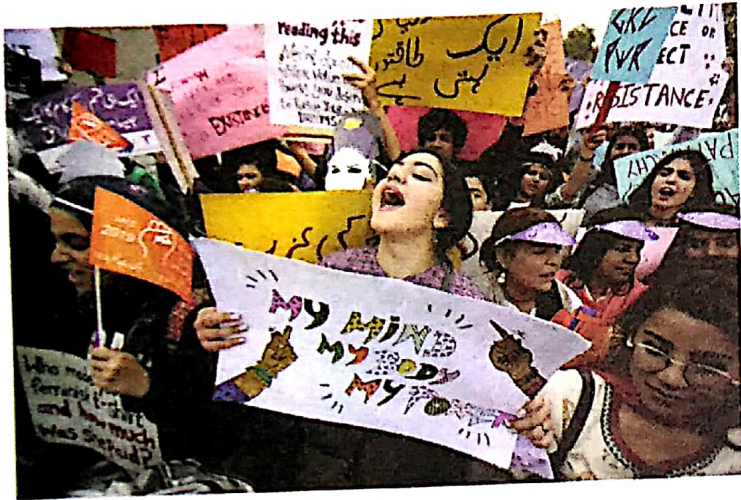
"...a concise definition of Islamic feminism gleaned from the writings and works of Muslim protagonists as a feminist discourse and practice that derives its under-

canonical traditions. A distinctly "Islamic" feminism, at its core, draws on the Quranic concept of equality of all human beings, and insists on the application of this theology to everyday life. Stemming from this basic definition, we encounter a plethora of different interpretations, movements, projects and personalities, creating feminisms that have diverse faces. Often, women's issues are trivialised into whether or not to wear the veil or shake hands with men outside their family, and while larger issues, such as domestic violence, are being strongly addressed, the central issue of what "equality" means and how it is expressed goes largely ignored. For example, domestic violence is wrong because it creates pain and suffering and is unjust, but the central belief of a man's right to rule over his wife is not always part of this discussion.

Feminism in Pakistan

Patriarchy is deeply entrenched in Pakistani society, with most people looking down upon the feminist movement. As feminism is considered a women-owned and women-

led movement in Pakistan, it has become a highly-contested ideology. It is indeed a perplexing idea since it has numerous types, diversions and contestations. It always ignites a battle within women who dare to take this ideology and try to implement. It gets arduous after one claims to be part of the process. They always are on a double-edged sword and making ferocious choices. It gets complicated about juggling things in life. There is



always a fear of a hidden guilt which others can't comprehend. Then there are people who discourage work and prefer women to focus on family planning. Broadly speaking, there are two dominant threads of feminist discourse in Pakistan: a modern, Islamic feminism and a secular feminism. Modern Islamic feminists seek to further women's rights by redefining Islamic views and focusing on the female-centric laws Islam offers. This form of feminism appeals largely to the lower, middle and upper-middle strata of society which look to religion for answers. Secular feminists consider feminism an extension of basic human rights, regardless of any religious connotations.

In politics, the undertones of feminist ideals have existed throughout, coming to the forefront only recently thanks to advancements in media and education. Fatima Jinnah, for instance, fearlessly led thousands of women to stand up for their well-being even before Pakistan was created. Soon after, Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan founded the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA) in 1949, aiming to further the moral, social and economic standing of women across the country. Similarly, the Women's Action

Forum (WMA) was established in September 1981, lobbying and advocating on behalf of women without the resources to do it themselves.

However, the real wave of feminist struggle arose in 1980 as a reaction to General Zia-ul-Haq's controversial implementation of the Hudood Ordinance which asked rape victims to present four eye-witnesses for their claim to be accepted. The WMA publically opposed the unjust rulings passed under the bill, raising awareness. The forum included women from all spheres who spoke against the government in the media, protested on the streets, conducted educational campaigns in schools and devised the famous 'Men, money, mullahs and military' slogan.

Unsurprisingly, feminism gained most traction during Benazir Bhutto's two terms as Prime Minister (1988-1990 and 1993-1996), during which time NGOs and focus groups were given considerable power. They urged the government to make amends. Unfortunately, the women-

Feminism Glossary

Benevolent sexism: Seems like a compliment, even though it's rooted in men's feelings of superiority. It's when men say women are worthy of their protection

Bropropriating: Stealing an idea from a woman and putting it into the world as your own.

Feminazi: A derogatory term for a radical feminist.

Feminism: Belief in and desire for equality between the sexes.

Gender fluidity: Not identifying with a single, fixed gender.

Hostile sexism: Openly insulting, objectifying and degrading women.

Internalized sexism: When the belief in women's inferiority becomes part of one's own worldview and self-concept.

Male gaze: A way of looking at the world through a masculine lens that views women as sexual objects.

Mansplain (verb) mansplains (adjective): When a man explains something to a woman in a condescending way when he either 1) doesn't know anything about it or 2) knows far less than the woman he is talking to.

Manspreading: When men take up excess space by sitting with their legs far apart.

Maninterrupting: When a man interrupts a woman, especially excessively.

Misandry: Hatred of men.

Misogyny: Hatred of women.

Non-binary: An umbrella term for people who don't identify as female/male or woman/man.

Patriarchy: A hierarchical-structured society in which men hold more power.

Sexism: The idea that women are inferior to men.

Transgender: A person whose gender identity differs from the cultural expectations of the sex they were assigned at birth.

Transphobia: Prejudice toward trans people.

Trigger: Something that forces you to relive a trauma.

Victim-blaming: When the victim of a crime or harmful act is held fully or partially responsible for it. If you hear someone questioning what a victim could have done to prevent a crime, that's victim-blaming.

Whimpster: A white, wimpy, emo guy who uses his male insecurity to prey on women who want to nurture.

Women of colour: A political term to unite women from marginalized communities of colour who have experienced oppression. It could include women of African, Asian, Latin or Native American descent.

Yes means yes: A paradigm shift in the way we look at rape, moving beyond "no means no" toward the idea that consent must be explicit.



turn decreased once Nawaz Sharif took office in 1997 and women found themselves losing ground to political conservatism and religious revivalism. In 1997, the Council of Islamic Ideology recommended making burqa mandatory, and honour killings also rose to new highs. Some lost ground was reclaimed when General Pervez Musharraf rallied for women's rights and encouraged their involvement in media, sports and other socio-political activities. The movement has continued to this day, albeit with lesser intensity than before.

Islamic feminism vs western feminism

Over fourteen hundred years ago, Islam gave women rights that women in the West have only recently began to enjoy. In the 1930's, Annie Besant observed, "It is only in the last twenty years that Christian England has recognised the right of woman to property, while Islam has allowed this right from all times. It is a slander to say that Islam preaches that women have no souls." (The Life and Teachings of Mohammed, 1932).

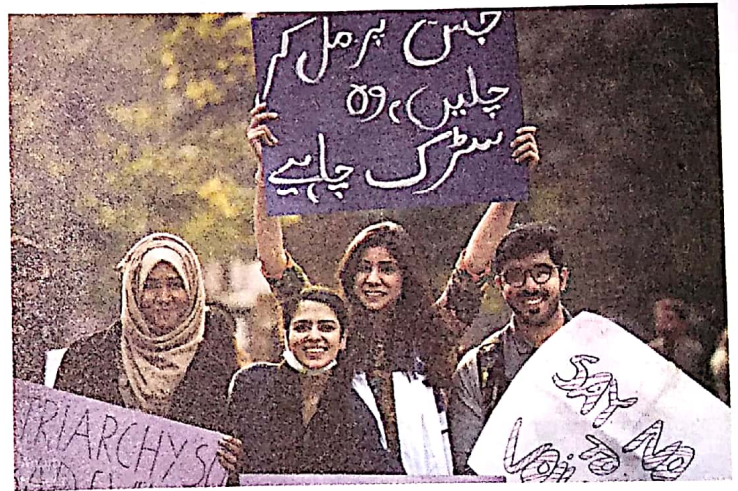
There are significant differences between Islamic and western feminism. Islamic feminism is based on certain non-negotiable values, i.e. equality with honour and dignity. Freedom has a certain Islamic responsibility whereas in the West freedom tends to degenerate into licentiousness, not in law but certainly in social and cultural practices. In Western culture, sexual freedoms have become a matter of human right and sex has become a matter of enjoyment, losing its sanctity as an instrument of procreation.

Though the Quran does not prescribe hijab or niqab (covering the whole body with a loose garment, including the face), as generally thought, it lays down certain strict norms for sexual behaviour. Both men and women have right to gratification (a woman has as much right as a man) but within a marital framework. There is no concept of freedom for extramarital sex in any form. In a marital

framework, it is an act of procreation and has much sanctity attached to it.

It is important to emphasise that in a patriarchal society men decided the norms of sexual behaviour. It was theorised that a man has greater urge for sex and hence needed multiple wives and that a woman tended to be passive and hence had to be content with one husband at a time. The Quran's approach is very different. It is not a greater or lesser degree of urge which necessitates multiple or monogamous marriages.

There is emphatic emphasis placed on a monogamous marriage in the Quranic verses 4:3 and 4:129. Multiple marriages were permitted only to take care of widows and orphans and not to satisfy man's greater urge. Verse 4:129 gives the norm of monogamy and not to leave the first wife in suspense or negligence. Thus, as far as the Quran is concerned, sexual gratification is a non-negotiable right for both man and woman tied in wedlock. Hence a divorcee and a widow are also permitted to remarry and



gratify their urge.

In Western capitalist countries, woman's dignity has been compromised and she has been reduced to a commodity to be exploited. Her semi-naked postures and her sexuality are exploited commercially and unabashedly. It is totally against the concept of woman's honour and dignity. Unfortunately, many Western feminists do not consider this objectionable but accept it as part of women's freedom. Some (though not as many) even advocate prostitution as a woman's right to earn a living. This is against the concept of Islamic feminism, which while sanctioning sexual gratification to be as much of a woman's basic right as a man's, prohibits extramarital sexual liaison. This, on one hand, upholds a woman's honour and dignity, and on the other, exalts marital relations to the level of sanctity, restricting it for procreation. Islamic feminists have to observe certain norms which Western feminists are not obliged to. □

How to Address Gender Disparities?

The World Economic Forum recently published its Global Gender Gap Index Report which ranks countries with respect to gender disparity. Pakistan ranked 151 out of 153 countries. Only Iraq and Yemen fared worse than Pakistan. Despite some extraordinary measures undertaken in recent decades by governments in Pakistan to reduce gender disparity, such a poor performance comes as a huge disappointment and requires serious soul-searching.

Indices are like black boxes. Before looking for the reasons behind Pakistan's dismal performance on gender parity front, it would be enlightening to peep into various components of the Global Gender Gap Index. The Index examines the gap between men and women across four fundamental categories: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment. Looking at the gaps, rather than the levels, has the advantage that the country rankings are independent of the development level of a country, and are determined exclusively by gender disparities.

What are the drivers of such gross gender disparities? Research has highlighted several factors, such as individual characteristics, social norms and economic deprivations. However, the failure of the state is the most critical reason behind gender disparity. Why does the state directly and indirectly create and exacerbate gender disparities?

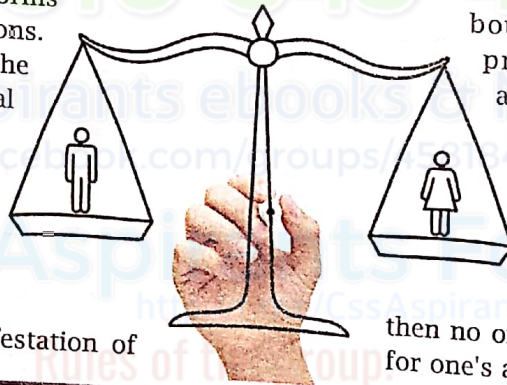
In Pakistan, a clear manifestation of

gender disparity is the preference for the sons. This is an ages-old norm with roots in the distant past.

Discrimination against women continues to take many forms. While some types of discrimination, such as discrimination in the distribution of inheritance rights, are evident and are routinely reported and observed, some other forms of discrimination may not be as visible. Sons getting quality education while daughters end up in low-quality schools or no school at all, is a common form of discrimination. Research has highlighted that gender of the family member influences the quality of food consumed within a household.

Human beings are assumed to be rational. Though this assumption has remained the subject of many a lively polemic and academic debate, human irrationality and bounded rationality being presented as alternative assumptions about human nature, we might like to stick to the assumption of human rationality for illustrative purposes.

If human beings were not assumed to be rational, then no one can be held accountable for one's actions. In social sciences, a



South Asia			
Country	Rank		Score
	Regional	Global	
Bangladesh	1	50	0.726
Nepal	2	101	0.680
Sri Lanka	3	102	0.680
India	4	112	0.668
Maldives	5	123	0.646
Bhutan	6	131	0.635
Pakistan	7	151	0.564

rational person is assumed to have specific attributes, such as an aversion to taking risks, a distinct preference for profit and a responsiveness to incentive system, etc. It can be shown that when the state fails to play its expected role, the rational human beings respond in predictable ways, leading to undesirable socio-economic outcomes.

The problem arises primarily from unequal power relationships. In social sciences, power is the ability to influence or control the behaviour of others. Economic independence is the most obvious measure of power. A vast majority of women are economically dependent on men (fathers, brothers, husbands, and sons). The state has a crucial role to play in maintaining the status quo in economic power relations. When opportunities are denied to women, their dependence further increases. For example, the share of women in government jobs is abysmally low. The female labour force is disproportionately concentrated in the informal sector.

Most women have to brave circumstances to achieve the things

which most men take for granted. For example, going through harassment on one's way to school or college is a daily fact of life for a large number of young women. Taking a stroll in the park is a big challenge because of social taboos or because the facility has been encroached upon. Women's physical mobility is also severely curtailed. While men can drive bikes, a woman on two wheels is still considered a deviation from the norm. In many cases, men nearly exclusively occupy the business place. In a nutshell, the opportunities to excel in the business world are highly constrained for women. They are more likely to be employees than employers.

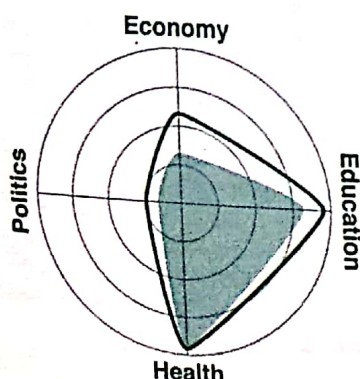
Pakistan's Performance on Global Gender Gap Report 2020

Pakistan ranks third-to-last (151st) on the 2020 Global Gender Gap Index, having closed only 56% of the gender gap. This performance represents an improvement from the previous edition (55.0), but it is insufficient to prevent Pakistan from falling in the rankings, as new countries have entered the rankings at a higher position. Pakistan ranks in the bottom 10 in three of the four main categories of the index and below the 100th mark in 12 of the 14 individual indicators composing the index. Encouragingly, however, Pakistan improves on a majority of them—sometimes markedly and is stable in the others. The gap remains cavernous in terms of economic participation and opportunities (32.7, 150th). Only one-quarter of women participate in the labour force (i.e. working or looking to work) compared with 85% of men (148th). Only 5% of senior and leadership roles are held by women (146th), twice the rate of 2016. It is estimated that only 18% of Pakistan's labour income goes to women (148th), one of the lowest share among countries studied. While a majority of countries have bridged or nearly bridged the educational gender gap, Pakistan's still stands at almost 20%. Less than half of women are literate, compared with 71% of men, while the share of women enrolled is systematically lower than the share of men across primary, secondary and tertiary education. The political gender gap has narrowed markedly over the past two years but remains wide (15.9, 93rd). In 2017, there was not a single female minister. As of 1 January 2019, there were three women in the 25-member cabinet.

Pakistan

rank
out of 153 countries **151**

score
0.00 = imparity
1.00 = parity **0.564**



Global Gender Gap Index

Economic participation and opportunity
Educational attainment
Health and survival
Political empowerment

	2006 score	2020 score
Global Gender Gap Index	112 0.543	151 0.564
Economic participation and opportunity	112 0.369	150 0.327
Educational attainment	110 0.706	143 0.823
Health and survival	112 0.951	149 0.946
Political empowerment	37 0.148	93 0.159

This situation has a lot of economic implications. When the state does not defend the rights of the women, the dynamics of gender-based power relations change. When the state fails to punish a man guilty of harassing a woman on her way to school or college, parents make a "rational" decision to take their daughters away from school or college, or, marry them off early. Adverse consequences of child marriages, and how different health and mental conditions get transmitted to the next generation, is beyond the scope of this article. In more extreme cases, when the condemned rapists evade the law with impunity and are seen roaming freely, and when the victim is stereotyped, then rational people have to make a decision to restrict their women relatives to the four walls of their homes.

Gender disparity also stems from the fact that the state fails to take care of the needs of senior citizens. Pension for the government employees is perhaps the only notable form of social security for senior citizens in Pakistan. Except in a few instances, where government employees retire from top positions, pension in most cases is not sufficient to meet the needs of senior citizens. One reason why pension is not enough to meet basic needs is high "dependency ratio" in Pakistan.

Older adults have to face a host of health challenges at this time. It is for this time that some people think they should invest in their sons more than their daughters because they believe that daughters will go to their own homes and sons are the only sources of support to fall back on in old age.

Investment in education requires resources. Resources being scarce, it is a 'rational' approach to invest more in the education of the sons rather than daughters. How realistic the expectations of the parents vis-a-vis their sons may be is another story. There are so many instances of sons miserably failing to take care of their parents, while daughters take care of their elderly parents remarkably well.

What is the way out? Sadly, no magic wand can fix this problem overnight. But many effective long-term solutions exist. The state needs to re-evaluate and redefine the incentive system so that

everyone has access to a minimum living standard. The elderly people should have no reason to doubt the state's assurance that they will have a minimum living standard.

Failing this, the whole incentive system would be distorted and girls will continue to be considered a liability while the sons will be regarded as an asset. Secondly, the state must establish its writ when it comes to protecting the rights of women. As long as harassers and rapists go scot-free, parents would always be racked by fear, and will not be able to send their daughters to schools, colleges or workplaces. It is the functioning of state institutions that can considerably address the issue of gender imbalances. The short-term intervention may come

from a host of stakeholders, such as NGOs and advocacy groups and even academia to sensitise the society about the enormity of discrimination against women. ■

Courtesy: The News on Sunday

Gender Equality and Social Conditions

The notion of society in this regard needs to be understood in terms of social conditions which specified the women to particular types of works and assigns that provided them lower status than that of men. Her lower status in comparison to men is generally irrationally legitimised on the basis of her child-bearing capacity, distinct physical attributes and a built which is shorter in height than man and in certain sense her vulnerability. In fact, the social structure was itself so arranged and patterned that its consequences led to inequality between genders. In a patriarchal society, the institutional patterns of residence, inheritance and lineage, patrilocal, patrilineal and patriarchal family structure, all represent and justify inequality between genders. There is a direct relationship between marital residence and male dominance. Researches reveal that non-male-based residence gives women more freedom of choice in mate selection, more protection from a potentially abusive husband and more freedom to end an unsatisfactory marriage. Altogether economic, legal, social and cultural beliefs generated a social definition and self image of women in a society.

Apart from these, religion as an institution, has been one of the most pervasive and persistent factor in defining women's role and her status. Ruether identifies religion as 'undoubtedly, the single most important shaper and enforcer of the image and role of women in society. The transcendental source—which is omnipotent and sacred—acquires extremely powerful instrumentality of legitimacy for various pronouncements affecting the status of women directly and indirectly. In behavioural and institutional forms, it governs the entire life cycle and everyday life of women in most of the societies.' Likewise, in monotheistic religions, a woman can never have her full sexual identity affirmed as being in the image and likeness of God, whereas this experience is freely available to every man in the existing culture. The overall milieu of values creates conditions in which women work, behave and live in a particular way and it also creates a psyche and self-image which leads to development of self-perceived as inferior to men. Further, it leads to formation of belief systems regarding women and also assigns them specific roles and defines the code of their behaviour pattern both within family and outside.

Rule of Law and Economic Development

Indifference and neglect can be damaging

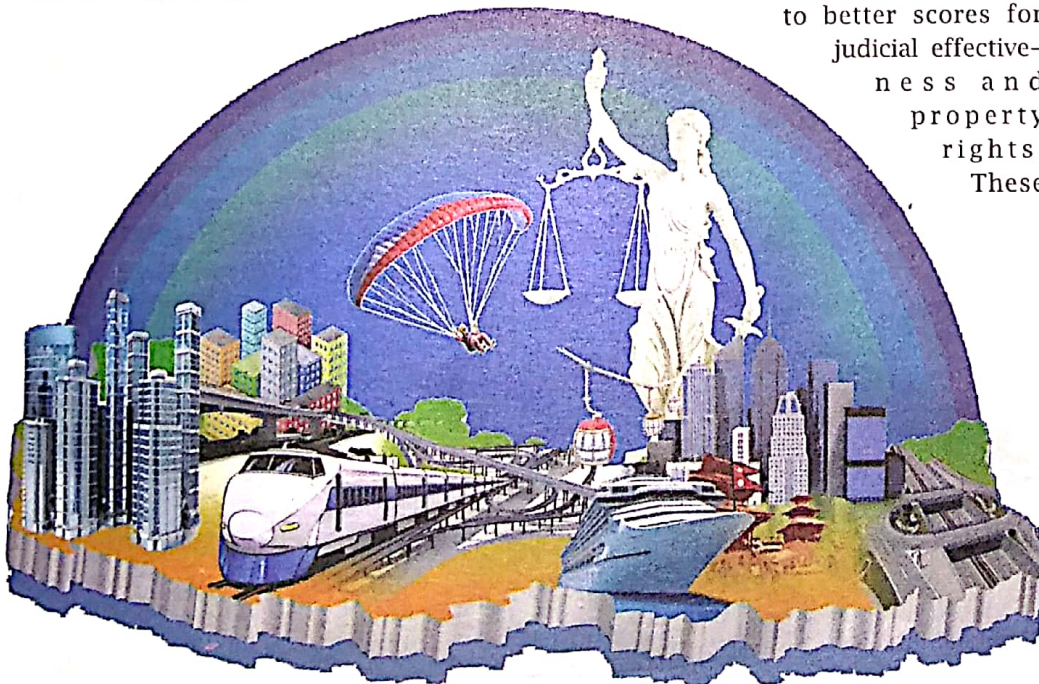
In the Declaration of the High-level Meeting on the Rule of Law, Member States noted that "the rule of law and development are strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing, that the advancement of the rule of law at the national and international levels is essential for sustained and inclusive economic growth, sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and hunger and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, all of which, in turn, reinforce the rule of law."

In today's era of globalization, capital will go where it is going to be safe as well as productive, i.e. attracting more capital in the form of profits. It would flee from societies or countries where corruption, bad policies and bad governance are rife, and rule of law is absent. Rule of law is the most important factor in determining the strength of an economy. This is why all successful economies concentrate on the rule of law; on the elimination of corruption; on human rights; and on democratic systems and processes which allow governments to reflect the will of their people.

In the current scenario, Pakistan is among those countries that repel capital instead of attracting it. It is worth noting that our laws may be more open and vibrant when compared to other countries in the region, but the 'rule of law' is based on actual enforcement of law. Stagnation in Pakistan's economy is due to our failure to establish the rule of law. This failure is evident from Pakistan's poor performance and low rankings on Rule of Law Index 2019 released by the World Justice Project (WJP)—Pakistan is ranked 117 out of 126 economies surveyed.

Moreover, Pakistan has been ranked 32nd among 43 countries in the Asia-Pacific region on the basis of economic freedom. The increase by 0.6 points on the Index of Economic Freedom, an annual ranking created in 1995 by The Heritage Foundation and The Wall Street

Journal, is due, essentially, to better scores for judicial effectiveness and property rights. These



The rule of law is at the heart of a just society. It is not simply because it allows for sound and fair principles to prevail but mostly because it creates an environment for steady and fundamental growth to occur. It is believed all over the world that, like its indispensability for development of all sectors of a society, the rule of law is essential for economic growth as well. This is why all successful economies concentrate on the rule of law; on the elimination of corruption; on human rights; and on democratic systems and processes which allow governments to reflect the will of their people.

factors have surpassed the decline in monetary freedom and fiscal health.

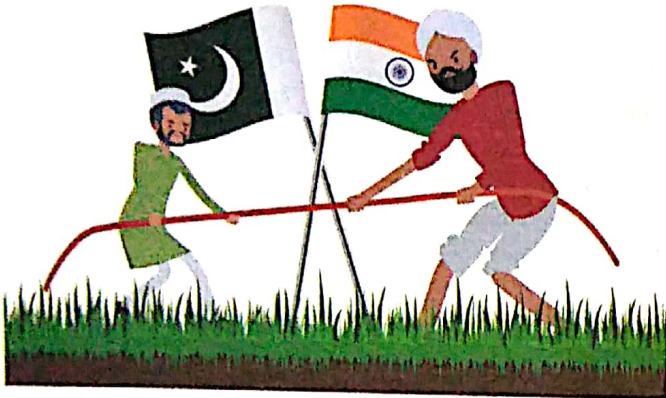
According to this rating, Pakistan's economic freedom score is 55.0 on a scale of 0 to 100, making its economy the 131st freest in the 2019 index. The index evaluates rule of

system hold back economic performance. Rising public debt and only a modest improvement in regulatory efficiency are also identified as factors which impinge on economic welfare.

It is important to note here that economy stagnates or even regresses in a country where governance is constrained, corruption is rampant, fundamental rights are denied, regulatory writ runs thin, and people do not trust state's law, justice and security departments. Economy progresses when the judicial system is fair and quick in providing justice in both civil and criminal cases and when all the above issues are nonexistent.

Pakistan with a weak economy and poor rule of law is fast moving to qualify as a banana republic—a politically unstable country with an economy dependent upon the exportation of a limited-resource product.

We are dependent on textile exports that have a share of



WJP's Rule of Law Index 2019 A glance at Pakistan

The top three overall performers in the WJP Rule of Law Index 2019 were Denmark (1), Norway (2), and Finland (3); the bottom three were: the Democratic Republic of Congo (124), Cambodia (125) and Venezuela (126).

In the regional context as well Pakistan ranks below Nepal, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh and is slightly above Afghanistan. Pakistan's 'rule of law' score on a scale of 0 to 1 (where 0 is worst and 1 is best) is 0.39. Nepal's score is 0.53 and its rank is 59. Sri Lanka's rank is 63 with a score of 0.52. India's score in rule of law is 0.51 and rank is 68. Bangladesh with a score of 0.41 is ranked 112. Only Afghanistan with a score of 0.35 is ranked below Pakistan at 123 out of 126. On constraints in government powers, Pakistan is ranked 74th out of 126 economies, — its best score in all parameters discussed. On absence of corruption, the index puts Pakistan at 112. In terms of openness of government it stands at 83rd position.

As far as fundamental rights are concerned it is placed at 114th out of 126. On order and security we are at 124th place among the last three countries in this category.

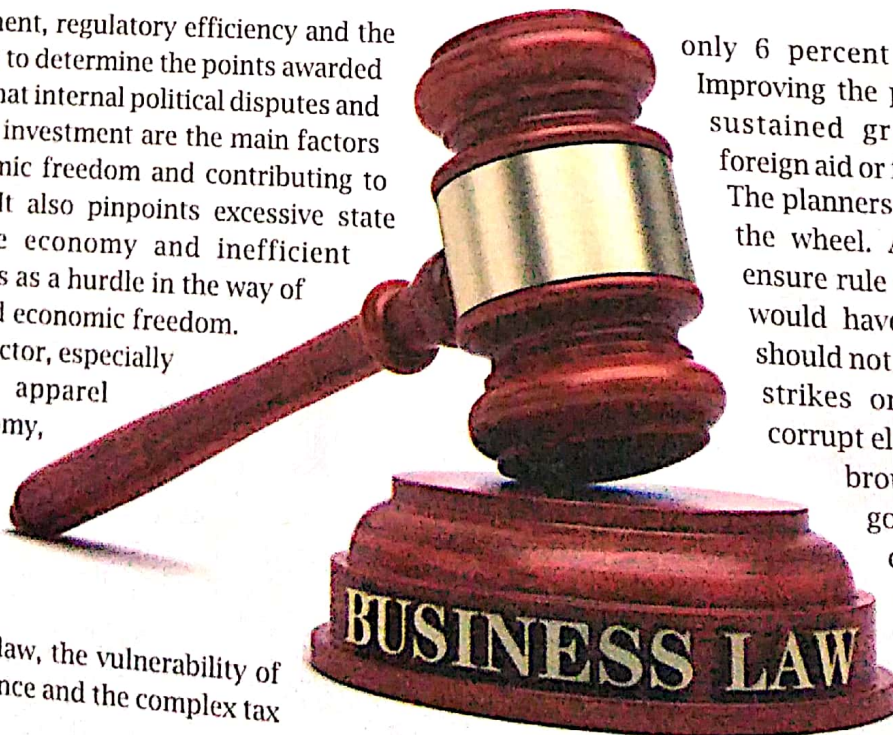
On regulatory enforcement Pakistan was again sitting very low at 116th out of the total. In civil justice we ranked 118th and in criminal justice 92nd.

According to WPJ, the index is intended for a broad audience that includes policymakers, civil society organizations, academics, citizens and legal professionals, among others.

The government should use this diagnostic tool to identify the country's strengths and weaknesses and encourage policy choices that strengthen the rule of law.

law, size of government, regulatory efficiency and the openness of markets to determine the points awarded to a nation. It notes that internal political disputes and low levels of foreign investment are the main factors holding back economic freedom and contributing to underdevelopment. It also pinpoints excessive state involvement in the economy and inefficient regulatory authorities as a hurdle in the way of economic growth and economic freedom.

The large informal sector, especially in the textiles and apparel section of the economy, also holds back earnings from exports. Crucially, the index points out that poor protection of rule of law, the vulnerability of the judiciary to influence and the complex tax



only 6 percent in the global trade. Improving the parameters that ensure sustained growth does not need foreign aid or foreign assistance.

The planners do not have to reinvent the wheel. All they have to do is ensure rule of law. The government would have to exert its writ and should not kneel down to threats of strikes or political fallout. The corrupt elements would have to be brought to the book. The government should carry out a fair accountability. All laws that deny citizen the fundamental rights should be repealed particularly the

Economy is the first casualty of war

War is a problem not a solution and the world has learned this lesson the hard way. For countries that get embroiled in armed conflicts, war is a catastrophe that most of the times turns to calamity. The long and arduous Afghan war between the most and the least powerful nations in the last decades has reminded us of this time and again. Besides the immediate death and destruction, war turns the development cycle backwards by mounting the crushing pressure of the conflict's financial cost on already distressed public fiscals. It also jeopardizes the future by scaring and sidelining the drivers of investment and growth. That's why no economist would ever endorse war for it devastates economy and markets. During the recent nerve-racking weeks, Pakistan and India were on the brink of a major conflict. It's a pity that instead of focusing on removing pointless barriers for human development, the lagging South Asian region was once again embroiled in a military conflict that threatens its very existence and poses a serious danger for the rest of the world. However, it is quite encouraging that there is now a sense of slow retreat. If the conflict had blown into a full-fledge war, it could have wreaked havoc on the economies of both countries. Currently, there exists no cost-benefit matrix of war for the two nuclear powers, India and Pakistan. If, by commission or omission, the tussle assumes scale, there will be no country left to gauge damage or celebrate victory.

There is no denying the fact that in case of a full-blown war, all calculations would go awry. But, one thing that is often ignored is the fact that even a limited conflict, like Kargil, would have huge costs and the first casualty will be the banking sector as it sucks out liquidity. Investors withdraw cash from the market and seek the safety of havens such as strong currencies, gold and maybe real estate.

It is always advisable that trade should not be hostage to contentious issues, especially in times of hostilities. However, conflicts do spoil the relationship between trade associations and chambers of commerce of India and Pakistan. Peace is essential to realizing full benefit of the potential of trade between the two countries, which according to the World Bank Report titled "Glass Half Full", amounted to a huge \$37bn. Pakistan exports cement, salt, dates, steel, cloth, etc. to India, while it imports raw material for pharmaceutical industries, vegetable produce, cotton and yarn.

National Accountability Bureau (NAB) law that allows the authority to keep an accused in custody for 90 days and before that period expires, books him in another case to ensure another 90-day custody.

Economy will not improve if all the businesses including shops, offices and factories have to arrange their own security. The state would have to give this confidence to its citizen that they would be safe under the government security. In fact, private securities are a threat to peace and order.

Private security-men openly bully common citizens—something that even real law-enforcers are not legally allowed to. Their actions are no different than rough-cut gangsters.

Last but not least, the poor regulatory institutions are playing havoc with the economy. Poor regulation has

Defining the Rule of Law

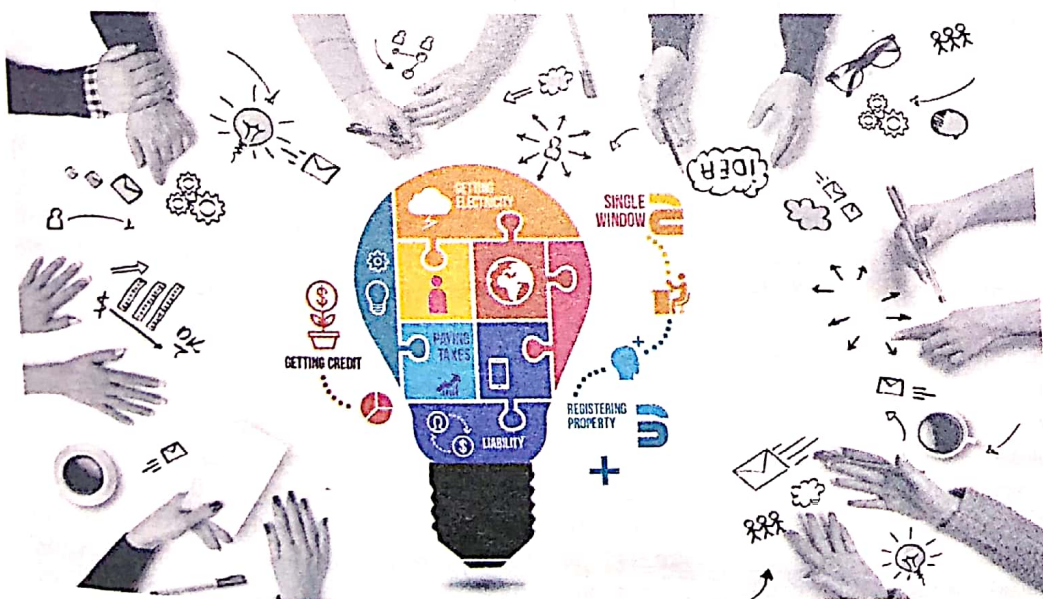
Effective rule of law reduces corruption, combats poverty and disease, and protects people from injustices large and small. It is the foundation for communities of justice, opportunity and peace—underpinning development, accountable government and respect for fundamental rights. Traditionally, the rule of law has been viewed as the domain of lawyers and judges. But everyday issues of safety, rights, justice and governance affect us all; everyone is a stakeholder in the rule of law. Despite its profound importance for fair and functioning societies, the rule of law is notoriously difficult to define and measure. A simple way of approaching it is to examine a set of outcomes that the rule of law brings to societies, each of which reflects one aspect of the complex concept of the rule of law.

placed Pakistan among countries with money laundering and even terror financing risks. The unabated violation of

environmental laws that results in reckless polluting of air and fresh/marine water is because of sloppy regulatory regime.

The anti-competition attitude is also because of toothless competition commission. Frail regulatory institutions are weakening the economy and fanning anarchy in the society.

The flaws in the criminal and civil justice have been pointed by none other than the Chief justice of Pakistan himself. 🇵🇰



So, change is inevitable. But are all changes for the better?

The last few decades have witnessed massive changes in the world we live in. Science and

technology have taken giant leaps that have surpassed all developments made since the start of civilisation, by a large margin. The world has transformed from being bipolar to unipolar, then quickly to multipolar. War has been privatised by the presence of so many terrorist outfits that we have lost track of who is affiliated to whom and who is real and who is perceived. News has become divided into two types: real and fake. As it appears, even photographs and videos can be faked to an extent that only experts can tell them apart. A group of people as far as in the Middle East or Afghanistan can be killed with a mere video game-like software in Pentagon! With no accountability!

The United States of America has abandoned its role as the "leader of the free world". Instead, it has made "America only" its official policy in every sector: trade, foreign policy, science and technology, military, environment, and so on. They have been doing this all along but, there was a veneer of modern liberal values to hide it. But this is no longer the case. The United Kingdom, despite being a nation that led the world in the Industrial Revolution and produced a long line of great thinkers, scientists, leaders, philosophers, writers and economists, has decided to abandon the rest of Europe and tow along the isolationist line of the USA. They were, for a long time, considered a junior partner of their richer cousin, but now they have decided to throw away the façade of Europeanness as an official policy. Seeing this, William Shakespeare would have written an excellent piece of comedy, or Adam Smith a new edition of his "Wealth of Nations," had they been alive today.

The nations that once took pride in leading the human civilisation have all shrunk to become Lilliputs of the "Gulliver's Travels". Their bodies remain big but the hearts and minds have given in to narrow and abrasive nationalism, so much so that they can't even tolerate a little difference of opinion or another faith, culture or ethnicity, let alone dissidence. Where are we heading, really? China is almost as old as the history of civilisation itself.

It was Heraclitus of Ephesus (c.535-475 BCE), a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher, who said "Panta rhei," or "everything flows," meaning everything or all things change. This is further explained in everyday English, for the benefit of the common people like us, as "the only constant in life is change".

Emperor Qin Shi Huang unified all of China and founded a modern state with legal systems, scientific standards and a centralised bureaucracy. The 2008 Summer Olympics opening ceremony comprised two parts titled "Brilliant Civilisation" highlighting the Chinese civilisation and "Glorious Era" showcasing modern China and its dream of harmony between the people of the world. The Chinese dream of harmony, however, is now mired in controversy, with many observers pointing out the heavy-handedness of its dealing with smaller nations and its own minorities.

We never learn from history, and that is also a lesson of history. Throughout the history of mankind, great nations usually followed some sort of openness and inclusiveness in their policy, and

'The only constant in life is change'



their downfall almost always coincided with the abandonment of those policies. A notable example of this is the fall of the Arabs in the Iberian Peninsula, when they were wiped out by the conquistadors of Spain during the 15th century.

The world seems to have forgotten that violent nationalism and religious intolerance in one country are likely to stoke up a similar environment of hatred and intolerance in other countries as well, with no apparent connection with the source country.

But there is hope. In a wider interpretation, "Panta rhei" means "the way up and the way down are one and the same. Living and dead, waking and sleeping, young and old, are the same." These things are the "same" in that they are all subject to change, arise from one change to vanish into another and all things, constantly, are in flux and are, in that regard, the same. ■

I failed the CSS examination in all three attempts. Every time I faced a dilemma: To fail, or not to fail, that is the question. Unabashedly, I always took the classic route to failure. I repeatedly fell for the clichéd jargons such as smart work versus hard work without distinguishing that smart work, in a nutshell, was just prioritized work. This prioritized smart work was a complete package that spurred me to adopt a holistic approach to the CSS exam. I realized at the time of my first attempt that failing CSS examination requires a colossal effort which often comprises poor preparation, lack of motivation, wrong direction, blind camp followership and ritualized preparation methodology.

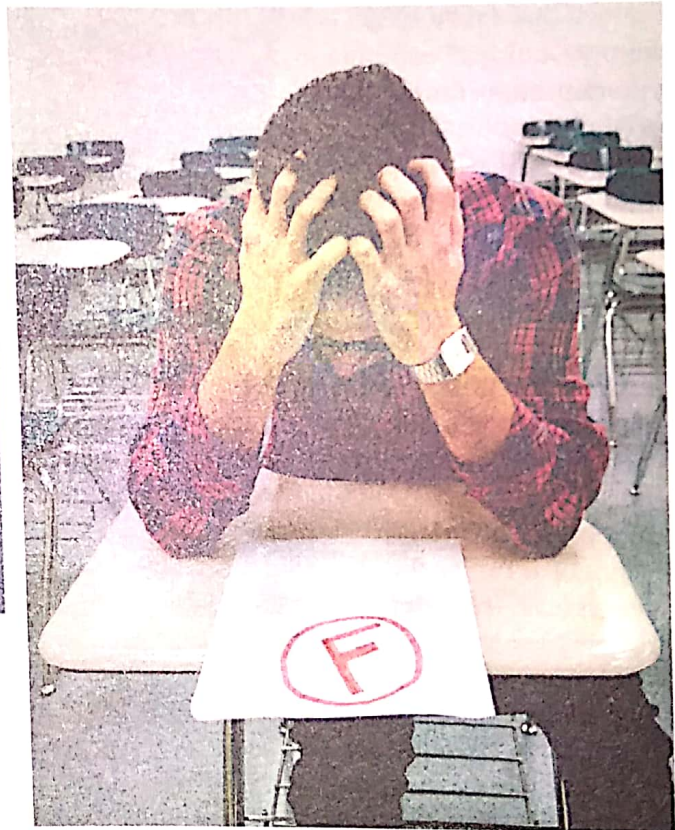
to CSS. It means that I like many other students preparing for the best and wish that I had all the time, but I never had enough of it. I realized that being fully prepared is a ruse as no amount of preparation would suffice for the expansive reading material that the exam entails. So, what mistakes I made which often made preparation a nightmare for me?

I chose wrong books for preparation. There is a broad range of reading material available in the market. Two aspects must be considered while selecting a book: One, whether the book is for compulsory or an optional subject; two, a very well written book on Pakistan Affairs would not suffice. Various issues would have to be prepared from a variety of sources. For compulsory

AN ODE TO FAILURE

How to Fail CSS

My wasteful efforts began in the following manner: I believed in a mythical six- or nine-month plan that could work for me to ace the CSS examination. Somehow, I fell into the delusion that CSS is just like any other routine exam which doesn't honour the background of a student. I assumed that the route to a good preparation, ergo success in CSS examination, is same for every candidate. I took the examination for granted and treated it in a casual manner like a short course which could be prepared in the manner of an instant, precooked recipe that is available to all and sundry. I thought all I needed was some of the vital ingredients such as educational background, reading habits, subject selection, experience in taking exam and burning midnight oil to sail through. Some lessons are bitter and my three failed attempts made me realise, "There is no short cut to a place worth going." Preparation for CSS examination is a long haul and requires patience, motivation, planning and a genuine desire to be curious about the travails of the journey. Time, like truth, is in short supply when it comes



subjects such as Pakistan Affairs, General Science and Ability, Islamiat, and optional subjects; selection of two or more books for a single subject is inevitable. Something interesting happened at the time when I was to select the books. I was overtaken by the perfectionist syndrome which captivated me for a couple of weeks and instilled a perilous doubt in my mind about the quality of the reading material. I wasted tremendous energy on some topics out of the fear that I wasn't preparing up to

the mark, and somehow the notes I was making were low in quality. It soon dawned on me that perfect was the enemy of good. Quality of answer improves with the passage of time, practice and after repeated appraisals of the issue at hand. There is no one-stop solution to writing a good answer.

The importance of distribution and allocation of time dedicated to compulsory as well as optional subjects cannot be stressed more. In my case, I had failed to realise that preparation for compulsory subjects would enable me to pass the CSS examination. Instead, I dedicated a large duration of my preparation to optional subjects, thinking it would enable me to secure allocation among top occupational groups.

For me, it turned out that there exists a fine balance that must be maintained to prepare for compulsory as well as optional subjects. It is no brainer that every subject in the optional and compulsory stack is important. It is a candid confession on my part that I didn't heed the advice of looking at past papers. Past papers are windows into the mindset of examiners as they give specific cues about the trends that have been following or would follow.

They lay bare the requirement stated in questions, the topics which have appeared and the breadth of course material which has been covered. I now understand that review of past papers even prior to starting the preparation is important as it can shape the priorities in preparing for different issues. It is helpful in saving time and energy by leaving more room for feedback and introspection. I have been a victim of poor preparation methodology and bad advice regarding CSS preparation. My self-destructive preparation roadmap was like this: I read a material, memorized it or wrote it down or made some notes of it. I championed notes-making and filling registers with regurgitated material. I never made an interactive conversation with the reading material, asked questions about the purposefulness of the reading or drew inferences from the messages contained in the material. I now realise that I had better approached the reading material with a genuine urge and curiosity to explore the reading scholarship. Instead of being hungry for acquiring and preparing notes, I should have read voraciously, understood the material and then jotted down my

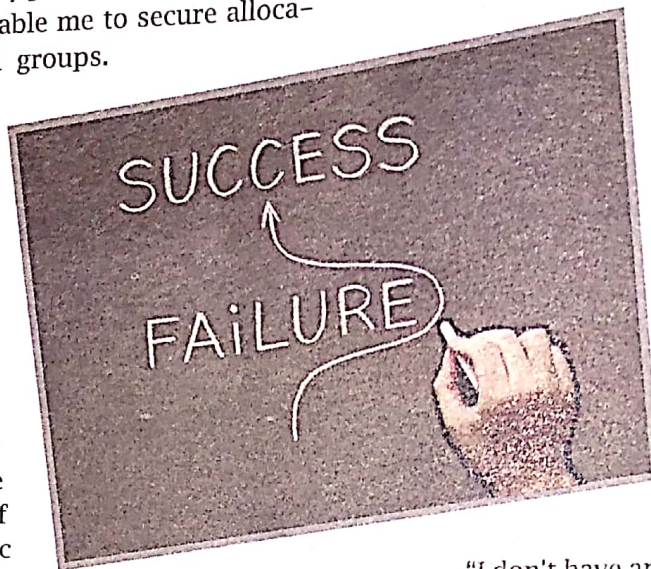
own contemplation.

Let me admit that reading and writing habits matter a lot in the preparation of CSS exam. Regrettably, I, too, tried to tread the path most frequently trod, and was unable, like most aspirants, to avoid the pitfalls of reading more and learning less; craving to write more and then writing less, thinking that only a good write-up is worthy of an attempt.

I am now absolutely convinced that qualitative and quantitative readings are of great importance in preparing for CSS examination. Qualitative reading in CSS parlance means reading quality material that is based on

thorough research and is derived from renowned sources such as international and local writers of repute, Time, Economist and Jahangir's World Times magazines, and lastly daily Dawn. Same advice holds for books for optional subjects. Quantitative reading is based on the notion of how much reading material and how many sources would be enough for an exhaustive preparation for the examination or for a particular paper.

"I don't have any extraordinary skills, I am just passionately curious," said Albert Einstein about himself. I think where I had gone remiss was the expression of my curiosity through written expression. After all, CSS exam requires a genuine urge to know about different things and how they operate. The compulsory and optional papers are fashioned in a manner to gauge your imagination, knowledge, insight and learning through written expression. Thought-provoking questions are asked about current affairs of the country



and the events that are shaping the position of Pakistan in the international community.

I confess that I didn't take advantage of the opportunity offered by the CSS Essay and Comprehension papers to hone and build strong writing skills. The topics offered in the Essay paper didn't pique my curiosity and I went for the run-of-the-mill preparation style. I couldn't realize that imaginative thinking and curiosity would aid me in facing the Essay paper as I went for the same old safe bets like preparing for essay topics on democracy or national integration.

The Précis and Composition paper was intended to teach reading; understanding

the reading material, writing in concise manner and avoiding common grammatical mistakes. This very paper is a

lynchpin of CSS examina-

tion as it enables an aspirant to gear up for the challenge. Its preparation is helpful in all papers. It measures and builds a variety of skills such as a strong vocabulary, answer-writing, identifying common errors in written English, embellishing written expression with felicitous phrases and idioms and helping in précis writing. The entire setup of this paper

exhorts an aspirant to immediately start writing practice.

Capitalizing preparation over a period of time through

persistent practice and getting written material

checked pay maximum

dividends in the examination. Sadly, I never took this

paper seriously and, hence, paid a heavy price.

CSS examination doesn't

throw a lot of curved

balls at students. Once in

a blue moon some particular papers are extremely knotty. The DNA of the test has not

changed dramatically over a period of some 48 odd years. It does honour the proposition that it is an exam of

competition. An exam entailing intense competition honours competitive advantage on the basis of educa-

tional background. Consider a student having a specialized degree in International Relations. He would certainly be comfortable while opting for International

Relations as an optional subject. On the other hand, a student who has not studied International Relations

during his graduate or undergraduate studies would find

it relatively difficult to compete with such a competitor. However it is, in no way, to suggest that students who have not studied International Relations should not opt for this optional subject. Extraordinary circumstances could restrict choice of optional subjects. The only downside here would be to compete against persons who are already having an unfair advantage over the others.

Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs) appearing in all papers, save that of English essay, can be a real game-changer for an aspirant. I had never thought that getting 3-4 more MCQs correct than an average student can help me secure a strong position. I would be fairly comfort-

able by gaining at least 40 more marks than any other student. This is precisely the point where I made the terrible mistake of not preparing well for the MCQs. I

should have looked at MCQs which had appeared in past papers, scoured through more reading material and anticipated the importance of some reading material which could figure in future MCQs. As written earlier, I repeatedly made the same mistakes which led to failure in CSS examinations. I narrate my failures here so that the prospective aspirants may take benefit of the hindsight I have acquired after repeated failures. I believe preparation should always strictly adhere to time limits.

Competition is cutthroat and

there is no other substitute to achieving success than hard work. CSS exam

is a test of nerves as it takes a heavy toll on patience and power to

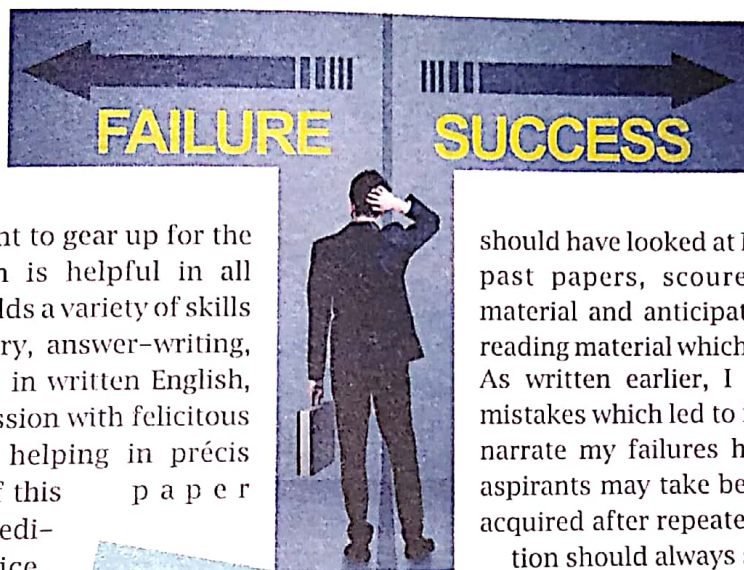
retain information. Consecutive papers certainly test the mettle of candidates as

they are required to repeat and reproduce their preparation in a matter of two to three

hours. Efforts invested in

preparation would bear fruit when they simulate exam day conditions and anxiety. I think that my story would raise concerns among many students not to choose the recipe for failure. Aspirants have a lot at stake in this examination and they deserve the best for their bright future. ■

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EXAM PACK

M. Bilal Butt

The 'World Day of Social Justice' is being observed on 20th of February as voices calling for social justice continue to find new resonance at all levels of society. Social justice is based on equality of rights for all peoples and the possibility for all human beings without discrimination to benefit from economic and social progress everywhere.

Promoting social justice is about more than increasing income and creating jobs; it is also about rights, dignity and voice for working women and men as well as economic, social and political empowerment. Building equity and social justice are basic paths for a country to meet growth targets that eventually lead to good governance. The very basics for social justice are building the relationship between effective government and motivated citizenry, making the political process inclusive, reducing the cost of doing business and catering to basic human freedoms and needs with a participatory approach.

In recent years, the term "social justice" has become as prominent as "human rights". Social justice is an underlying principle for peaceful and prosperous coexistence within and among nations. It is the

equal access to wealth, opportunities and privileges within a society.

We uphold the principles of social justice when we promote gender equality or the rights of indigenous peoples and migrants. We advance social justice when we remove barriers that people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability.

What is Social Justice?

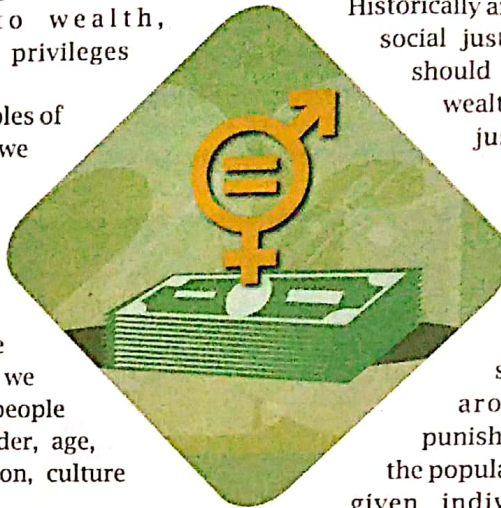
Social justice is a political and philosophical theory which asserts that there are dimensions to the concept of justice beyond those embodied in the

principles of civil or criminal law, economic supply and demand, or traditional moral frameworks. Social justice tends to focus more on just relations between groups within society as opposed to the justice of individual conduct or justice for individuals.

Historically and in theory, the idea of social justice is that all people should have equal access to wealth, health, well-being, justice, privileges and opportunities regardless of their legal, political, economic or other circumstances. In modern practice, social justice revolves around favouring or punishing different groups of the population, regardless of any given individual's choices or actions, based on value judgements regarding historical events, current conditions and group relations.

History

Social justice as a concept arose in the



World Day of Social Justice 2020

Social Justice

An underlying principle
for peaceful coexistence



early 19th century during the Industrial Revolution and subsequent civil revolutions throughout Europe, which aimed to create more egalitarian societies and remedy capitalistic exploitation of human labour. Because of the stark stratifications between wealthy and the poor during this time, early social justice advocates focussed primarily on capital, property and the distribution of wealth.

By the mid-20th century, social justice had expanded from being primarily concerned with economics to include other spheres of social life to include the environment, race, gender and other causes and manifestations of inequality. Concurrently, the measure of social justice expanded from being measured and enacted only by the nation-state (or government) to include a universal human dimension. For example, governments (still today) measure income inequality among people who share citizenship in common. But social justice can also be considered at the level of humanity as a whole. As the United Nations states: "Slaves, exploited workers and oppressed



such as healthcare, immigration and the criminal justice system to remedy potential biases toward certain demographic groups.

Islamic Concept

Islam, being religion of nature, understands that human beings are born with varying gifts. As they differ in their bodies and their features, so they differ in their mental and other capabilities. Their environments, their circumstances and their hereditary gains also differ. In this situation, there can be no possibility of economic equality. Thus the existence of economic inequalities among the human beings is but natural. It is also there because Islam allows individual initiative in earning wealth and gives right of private ownership of property. Moreover, existence of inequalities in economic and social life is a part of Divine scheme whereby God tests and tries the people to know who are good and who are bad. To this fact, the Holy Quran refers when it says:

• He it is who has placed you as viceroys of the earth and has exalted some of you in rank above others, that He

Ehsaas Program

Prime Minister launched a comprehensive Poverty Alleviation Program "Ehsaas" on 27th March 2019 with its 4 focus areas and 155 policy actions to reduce inequality, invest in people and uplift lagging districts. The program is for the extreme poor, orphans, widows, homeless, disabled, jobless, poor farmers, labourers, sick and undernourished; students from low-income backgrounds and for poor women and elderly citizens. This plan is also about lifting lagging areas where poverty is higher. Four pillars include: addressing elite capture and making the government system work to create equality; safety nets for disadvantaged segments of the population; jobs and livelihoods; and human capital development. In the 2019-20 budget, the government substantially increased pro-poor spending under the prime minister's Ehsaas programme. Budget allocation for the prime minister's Ehsaas program has doubled to Rs190bn in 2019-20, from Rs100bn a year ago. This includes an unconditional cash transfer program (BISP) of Rs5,500 per quarter to 5.1 million beneficiaries. Under the Waseela-e-Taleem program, 3.2m children in 50 districts are receiving conditional cash transfer of Rs1,000 per quarter to reduce the dropout rate. The prime minister has recently launched the Ehsaas Undergraduate Scholarships Programme for 200,000 unprivileged children.

women are above all victimized human beings whose location matters less than their circumstances."

Examples

Examples of social justice can be found throughout all types of societies, government policies and movements. In socialist economies, social justice forms a foundational principle of economic policy. Socialist governments commonly carry out vast programmes of forced redistribution of land, capital and other assets, such as the Great Leap Forward and the Holodomor, in the name of social justice.

In capitalistic societies, governments regularly intervene in the economy in support of social justice. Social justice advocates often push for policy reform in areas

may try you by (the test of) that which He had given you..... -(6:165)

• And Allah has favoured some of you above others in provision..... -(16:71)

• We have apportioned among them their livelihood in the life of the world, and raised some of them above others in rank that some of them may take labour from others..... -(43:32)

However, despite recognising inequalities as natural and part of Divine world order, Islam permits differences in wealth within reasonable limits only. It does not tolerate that these differences should grow so wide that some people live their life in absolute luxury while millions are left to lead a life of abject poverty and misery. It does not

allow economic disparities turn into an extreme position wherein millions of have-nots' become serfs and slaves in the hands of few 'haves' of the society. In other words, we can say that Islam does not believe in equal distribution of economic resources and wealth among the people rather it believes in equitable, just and fair distribution. It bridges the gulf between the rich and the poor by taking very effective measures to modify the distribution of wealth in favour of the poor.

Islam, on the one hand, ensures just and equitable distribution of wealth among the people and, on the other, provides social security to the poor and the destitute in the form of basic necessities of life. Besides that, Islam also protects the weak from the economic exploitation by the strong. All there are various aspects and manifestations of what is called Islamic social justice.

Thus social justice (which is also referred to as economic justice or distributive justice) according to Islamic conception includes three things, namely : (1) fair and equitable distribution of wealth, (2) provision of basic necessities of life to the poor and the needy, and (3) protection of the weak against

this reality but usually they are not prepared to fight for social justice.

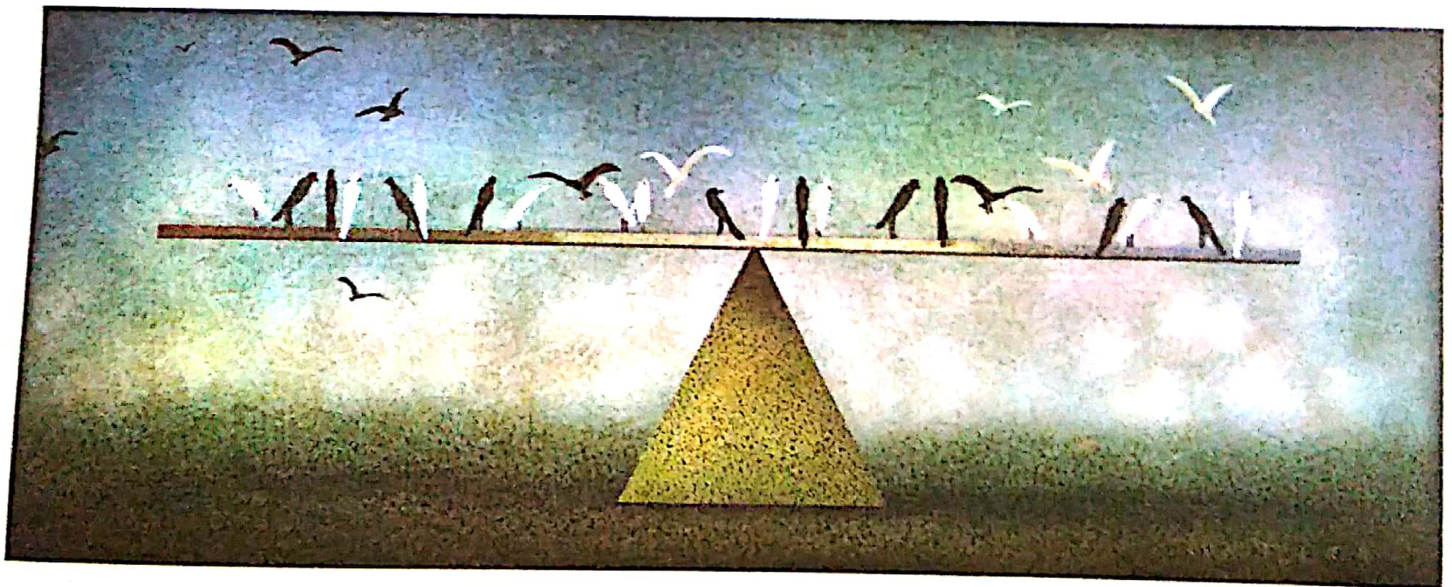
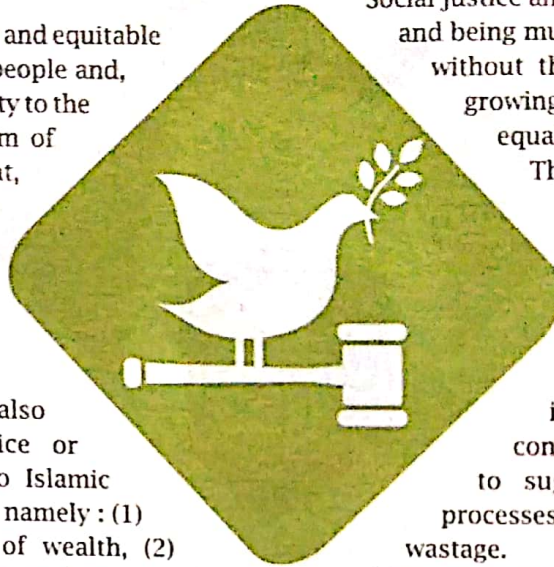
It is politically risky in the short-term and is against the norms of culture they are attuned to. Our constitution is based on principles of social justice but the punitive laws are applied on powerless, while the influential are allowed to break them with impunity. This is impeding our growth in a myriad of ways.

Social justice and economic growth go hand in hand and being mutually, inclusive one cannot happen without the other. All those enterprises are growing above normal pace that provide equal opportunities to their workers.

They recruit their human resource on pure merit and ensure the best ones move up on the basis of performance and commitment towards the enterprise.

The criterion is to reward the competent and weed out the incompetent irrespective of their connections. Workers at all level are free to suggest ways for improvement in processes that enhance efficiency and reduce wastage.

This engagement with the workers becomes a learning process as those suggestions are considered



economic exploitation by the strong.

Economic Growth & Social Justice

Social justice is all about empowering people with equal opportunities and ensuring merit in the society instead of limiting opportunities of growth to a particular class, race or religion.

Economic growth is also closely linked to fair and equitable treatment with every citizen in a country and employees in an enterprise. Our rulers are well-aware of

and if rejected reasons a given to the suggesters. This enhances their learning about the way the company operates. No one makes fun of illogical suggestions made out of ignorance by the worker.

This process creates cohesion among the workers and the sponsors of the company. The company continues to outpace its rivals in growth and efficiency. The meal menu in socially compliant companies is the same for all employees including the chief executive and served in the

same room.

There are quite a few enterprises, small and large, which are equal opportunity employers and are scaling up regularly. But generally speaking majority of the enterprises are neither equal opportunity employers nor socially compliant. This is one of the reasons that shorten the life of many of our commercial enterprises. The public sector companies provide better facilities to their employees but are "exclusive opportunity employers". The appointments are made either on

country with others. The government alone cannot address these issues and the civil society and the affluent should support fair reforms.

The entrepreneurs should realise they would rapidly scale up if they share a small portion of their income with the workers to ensure social compliance. A ten percent of the net income spent on workers welfare this year could result in 20 percent growth next year. Global as well as Pakistani evidence shows that in five years time, the net worth of the socially compliant entrepreneur would be much higher

World Social Justice Day

"Equality of opportunity is the essence of Social Justice" is a well-known saying by Tony Honore. To rationalize this eminent approach, the World Social Justice Day is observed every year on the 20th of February since 2007. The purpose of the day is to enforce equal rights and opportunities within a nation and between nations. Social justice is defined as including the issues of poverty, unemployment and unfair exclusion that result in social harm. It is vital for any healthy society as it can provide equal rights to all humans within a society because that's the only way societies and nations flourish without any discriminations under peaceful circumstances. In the present geo-economic Great Game of power politics, states need to be stable to secure their national interest.

The World Day of Social Justice highlights the importance of removing barriers people face because of gender, age, race, ethnicity, religion, culture or disability. As one of its guiding principles, UNPO is committed to advocating for the right to equal participation in society for some of the most marginalized minorities in the world. Social Justice is a key principle that specifically ensures a fair and equal distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society. On this day, therefore, it is particularly important for the international community to turn its attention to the social injustices, ravaging nations across the world and reflect on what can be done to dismantle social, political and economic mechanisms that systematically deny equal rights and opportunities for minorities and indigenous peoples around the world.

political grounds or influence. There, promotions have got nothing to do with the merit. They consider facilities as their divine right without contributing towards the success of the enterprise. The performance of these companies is known to all.

No one should be excluded from the development process. Entrepreneurs should be respected and obeyed to maintain discipline; but the workers should also be treated respectfully. No enterprise can attain sustained growth without satisfied workers. In the same way skills and craftsmanship would be useless if there is no enterprise to benefit from those skills. The system should be so fair that it eliminates incompetent entrepreneurs or workers.

Our thinking on social justice should refocus on work as this is the only way to take people above the poverty line and give them a chance to be a partner in the solution. This is social justice. The civil society will have to oppose social injustice as it is an inevitable feature of our society.

Social justice is in fact a realisation by the society that it is sensitive to the needs of others. All the members of the society should vow to share the resources available in the

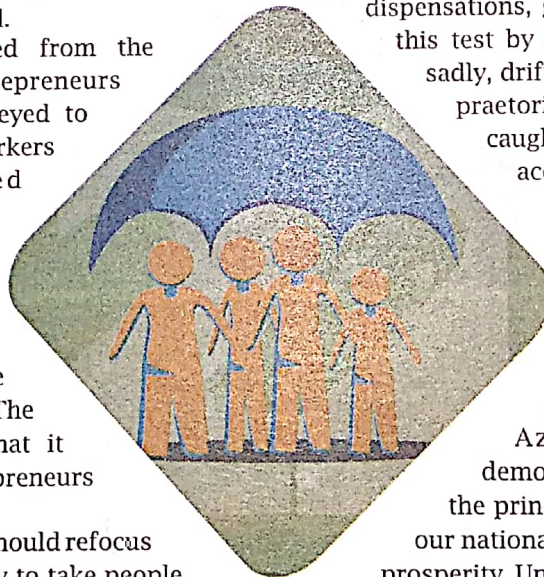
than the worth of its same-sized non-compliant competitor.

Conclusion

In the present unsettled times for democratic dispensations, governments the world over are failing this test by not adhering to three principles—and, sadly, drifting towards totalitarian tendencies and praetorian rule of law. Pakistan too finds itself caught in this dangerous drift, particularly accentuated in the last few years. The republic requires course correction, and here is why.

A state determines its national purpose, interests and objectives and makes policies, strategies and action plans accordingly. Our national purpose was delineated by Quaid-i-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah as a democratic and enlightened polity based upon the principle of social justice and thus pursuing our national objectives through peace, progress and prosperity. Unfortunately, we lost sight of this purpose and ended up becoming a security state at cross purposes with the democratic aspirations of a society that requires political, economic and social justice. Unless we humanise the state, the national security narrative will continue to dominate at the expense of human security and development. ■

The writer is a Lahore-based freelancer.





Hassan Bin Zubair

On May 31, 2018, Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas, or FATA, formally ceased to exist. Home to five million people, and covering more than 27,000 square kilometres, these tribal districts have attracted enormous international attention in the last two decades due to their shared border with war-torn Afghanistan. The Government of Pakistan has now brought an end to FATA's decades-old special status by merging the tribal agencies with the neighbouring province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Before the merger with KP, FATA was governed by a special set of laws known as the Frontier Crimes Regulations, enacted in 1901 by the British Empire to confront Pashtun insurgents. Poor governance and decades of warfare in neighbouring Afghanistan had rendered the region vulnerable to continuing insurgency and deprivation. This, in turn, had a spillover effect on health, education, and livelihoods of the people and

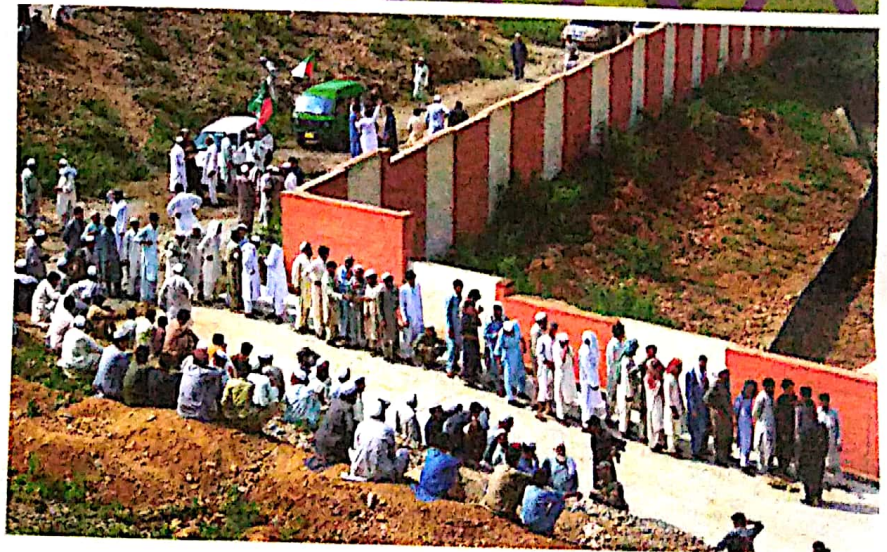
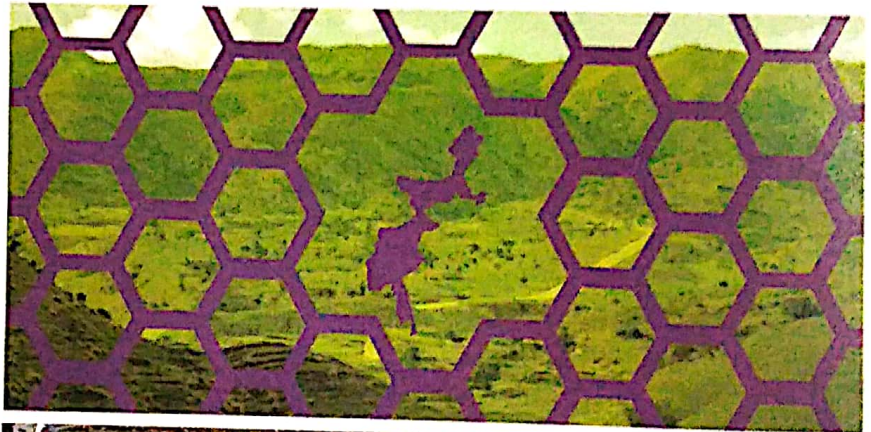
caused the dislocation of a substantial portion of the tribal population to other parts of the country. UNDP's 2017 Human Development Report ranked FATA lowest in the country on its Human Development Index (HDI). The merger of FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa represents an opportunity and a new hope for peace and prosperity. But there is still a long way to go.

The Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Peshawar High Court have extended their jurisdictions to the tribal districts, and a roadmap has been developed to construct courthouses and set up district and session courts, but persistent insecurity in the area will make this a challenging task. There is a sobering lesson to be drawn from the Provincially Administered Tribal Areas in KP province, where nonstate actors capitalized on the grievances of citizens who suffered delays in the legal system to introduce their own, competing system of justice.

The other unresolved issue is the old policing system in FATA. The seven tribal agencies had a different policing

Merger of FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

In May 2018, the parliament of Pakistan passed a historic constitutional amendment that ended the semi-autonomous rule of its Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), abolished the colonial-era laws that governed it, and merged it with the country's territory. The merger was widely heralded as a way of bringing development to the impoverished tribal region and peace and stability to its militant and conflict-laden history. This was also a significant step to deal with the law and order situation and mainstreaming the region. The merger of FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province is an important step by the Government of Pakistan to address the prevailing security issues. The merger was also considered a salient feature of National Action Plan (NAP) to establish strategies for addressing the local conflicts in the county. It is believed that the FATA reforms may help in dealing with the structural and cultural reasons of the violence prevailing under the old system, and developing a comprehensive plan for countering extremism and ensuring de-radicalization.



About FATA

The FATA region consists of seven agencies including Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram, Bajaur, Mohmand, South Waziristan and North Waziristan and six frontier regions known as Dera Ismail Khan, Tank, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Kohat and Peshawar Frontier Regions. It lies in the heart of South Asia, a landlocked tribal belt. Spread over an area of 27,220 sq km, the region is inhabited by majority Pakhtun ethnic group and shares about 600-km border with Afghanistan. The Pakhtun tribes are divided across the political border known as the Durand Line between Afghanistan and Pakistan. The Pakhtun tribes, living across this region are known as "independent or free tribes." Each tribe is an inhabitant of a specific geographical location and divided into sub-tribes, clans or Khel (sub-clans). Members of these tribes frequently travel between the two countries but have less exposure in interacting with other regions of the country due to the structural constraints and tribal setup. This region remained the epicenter of "The Great Game" between the Russian and British empires in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. This tribal belt of Pakhtun fought against the British. Realizing the strength of the Pakhtun belt and their resistive nature, and in pursuit of the Great Game strategy, the British came to an agreement with Amir Abdul Rehman and divided the tribal region in 1893 under the Durand Line Agreement. As per this agreement, one of the parts came under the rule of British India while the other went to Afghanistan. Since the inception of the Durand Line agreement, FATA was regulated by a specific administrative system. They were governed under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) law which was enacted by the British to administer FATA through Political Agents (PAs) and Maliks. However, they were autonomous in running their internal affairs. After the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947, FATA was merged with Pakistan. Pakistan accepted the same administrative system in FATA governed under the British FCR law. FATA was given a constitutional status as a territorial part of Pakistan according to Article 1 and 2 of the 1973 Constitution. Autonomy in the region was granted to Maliks who were basically the leaders of the tribe. The Maliks dealt with other tribes and government on behalf of his tribe. The agencies were governed through PAs who were representatives of the federal government. They were granted judicial, revenue and executive powers. Under FCR law, the federal government representative in the tribal area was empowered to punish the whole clan for a crime committed by an individual by imposing heavy fines, detaining the members of a tribe, snatching or vandalizing their property. PA would provide grants to Maliks for their allegiance to the government and their tribes' role in maintaining peace and suppressing crimes.

system, run by the chief administrator—a representative of the president of Pakistan—and deferential to local Maliks (notables). There is an ongoing debate in KP: should the FATA police (known as Khasadars and Levies) be under the command of the Central Police Office in Peshawar, or should they operate directly from the provincial Home Department? The merger of Balochistan Levies with the provincial police force cost the national exchequer billions of

rupees with no tangible results on the ground, and as we know from bitter experience there, the merger of tribal police must be conducted tactfully, and an efficient criminal justice system must be established to gain the public trust. The KP government will also need to critically assess the strategic framework developed for the police in 2014 and evaluate the performance of the Central Police Office in Peshawar over the past five years in order to chalk out areas where improvement is needed. Restoration of peace and the establishment of durable political structures are critical for governance and rule of law to be productive as representative political structures will enable the provincial government to pursue socio-economic development in the region. Islamabad has adopted a 10-year plan to develop major infrastructure, establish industrial zones, set up modern urban hubs in all tribal districts, establish universities and medical colleges, develop the mineral and agriculture sectors, create job opportunities for youth, and most importantly, rehabilitate dislocated persons. The 10-year plan will spend 30 percent of allocated funds on efforts to counter radicalization and transform local communities, and bringing local bodies on board at the grassroots level will be of critical importance.

Two major challenges are going to confront the implementation of the 10-year development plan. First, the KP government has no binding agreement with the federal government or other provincial governments



for the allocation of funding from the National Finance Commission. This apparently glaring omission reflects the continuing political dynamic among Pakistan's provinces, which will be called upon to sacrifice a portion of their shares of federal revenue, and the eventual outcome has yet to be determined. Second, transparent and account-

able administration will be of critical importance. The KP government will need to assess the performance of its Civil Secretariat, especially in the northern and southern districts of the province, which are demographically similar to the tribal districts, and which have a history of heavy-handed misrule by public sector agencies. The northern districts of KP—Shangla, Kohistan, Torghar, and Upper Dir—currently have the lowest HDI ranking in the province, as highlighted in the UNDP's 2017 Human Development Report.

Finally, it will be crucial to avoid overlapping roles and responsibilities among institutions. Currently, FATA affairs are run by three agencies—the FATA Disaster Management Authority, the FATA Secretariat, and the FATA Development Authority. Administration of the region could be managed efficiently through a single agency, whose institutional capacity could be enhanced to promote speedy development, effective coordination and better fiscal management. For maximum accountability and transparency, yearly third-party evaluations would be an essential tool, and a strict, merit-based system for the hiring and promotion of officials will also be a prerequisite.

Meanwhile, the merger of FATA with KP and the successful implementation of the 10-year development plan will depend on the security situation. Continued volatility and insecurity will make it extremely difficult for provincial government to achieve tangible results on the ground. The Pakistan Army's role in de-escalating security threats will, therefore, be significant—and delicate, due to the long history of military conflict in the region. The current scenario offers a moment of hope to the tribal

population that a century of insurgency will at last be put to rest, and that the legacy of underdevelopment and deprivation will yield to effective programmes and policies under the 10-year development plan. For this change to occur, the Government of Pakistan needs to take a holistic approach to longstanding structural problems and provide an environment that is conducive to the participation of all stakeholders. A good start would be to establish durable political structures in all seven tribal districts to allow them to begin to shape their own socioeconomic and political destiny.

The effort of the Pakistan government to merge FATA with KP is momentous to bringing peace, stability and prosperity to the FATA region with efficient governance and rule of law. The mainstreaming of FATA aims to bring the tribal region at par with the rest of the country constitutionally,

politically, administratively and economically. FATA is already heavily dependent on KP province for administrative workforce and facilities as well as social services such as education and health. It is hoped that the consolidation of this ethnic, cultural and social cohesion with KP will not only bring administrative and infrastructural development in FATA, but will also open up the region to new businesses, better communication, greater development and positive social change. On the external front, the progress towards mainstreaming will reduce the vulnerability of the border areas with Afghanistan ensuring stability and security along the Durand Line which is essential for both internal stability in Pakistan and for the region in general.

However, it is equally important that all reform efforts should be introduced keeping in view the needs, demands

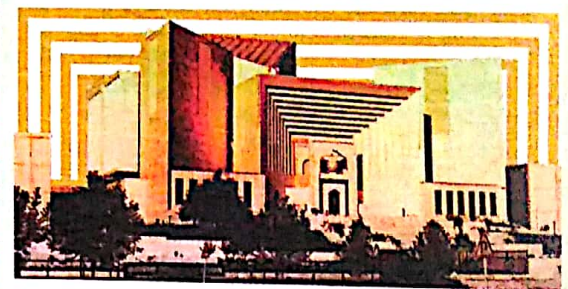


PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: ANISHA HANU, SAMARA DIGITAL

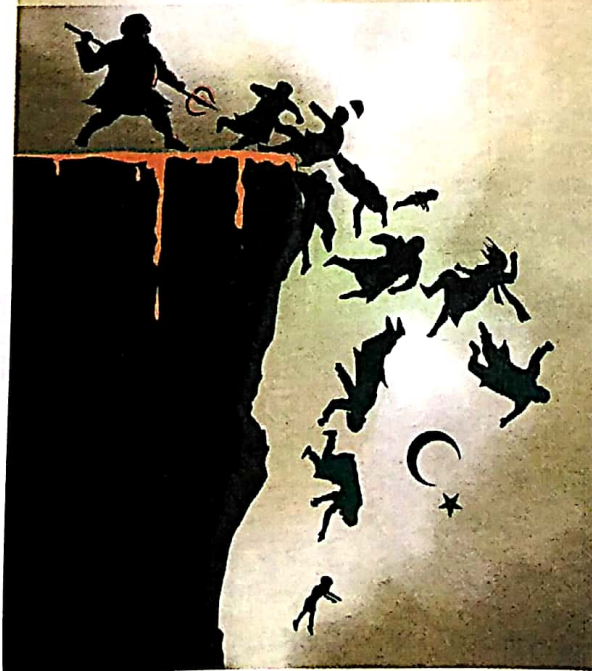
and wishes of the people of FATA region. The status of FATA as a separate tribal region not only affected the functioning and legitimacy of the governance system but also resulted in militancy, illegal trade and corruption. The reforms in economic, governance and legal system will definitely change the dynamics of the region. Implementation is a difficult task; government alone cannot do it, hence, support from civil society is crucial. Especially, the youth from FATA with potential and motivation can play a significant role in uplifting the region. Success requires the effective implementation of peace and security measures as well as participation of the people to make it work. ■

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With an utter disregard to concerns shown by international community and a number of opposition parties, as well as some sane voices, though scant in today's India, the Indian parliament approved the Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019, which became an act after it got the President's nod on December 12. The controversial Act aims to provide citizenship to those who had been forced to seek shelter in India because of religious persecution or fear of persecution in their home countries, primarily Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis and Christians from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh. It, therefore, amends the 1955 Act to grant exemptions to illegal migrants from these communities, who reached India on or before December 2014. In the instant write-up, the author has analysed this law from various perspectives to impart a clear understanding to JWT readers.

India's New Citizenship Law

The CAA heralds a
Hindu Rashtra



Ignoring national and international furore, both houses of Indian parliament, i.e. Lok Sabha (House of the People) and Rajya Sabha (Council of States), passed a controversial amendment to the country's 1955 citizenship law. The controversial as well as highly discriminating against the Muslims, the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) 2019, which received presidential assent on December 13 to become an act, naturalises non-Muslim refugees as Indian citizens, but excludes Muslims. The opposition parties, spearheaded by the Indian National Congress (INC), pilloried the bill as a violation of the Constitution (Articles 25 to 28: Freedom of Religion). These articles provide that all religions are equal before the State and no religion shall be given preference over the other. Citizens are free to preach, practice and propagate any religion of their choice—Article 25 (1) clearly states that "...all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion.

Here is a brief commentary on different aspects of this discriminatory law.

Ultra vires the constitution

The law, no doubt, violates the fundamental values of the Indian constitution and spreads the wings of "Hindutva" or Hindu nationalism, in this so-called secular country by making religion the key to citizenship. In 1994, a five-member bench of the Supreme Court of India, in its Ayodhya Case judgment (Dr M Ismail Faruqui v Union of India), had already noted: "It is clear from the constitutional scheme that it guarantees equality in the matter of religion to all individuals and groups irrespective of their faith emphasising that there is no religion of the State itself. The Preamble of the Constitution read in particular with Articles 25 to 28 emphasises this aspect and indicates that it is in this manner the concept of secularism embodied in the constitutional scheme as a creed adopted by the Indian people has to be understood while examining the constitutional validity of any legislation on the touchstone of the Constitution."

The bill, thus, clearly is ultra vires the constitution of India and is a serious blow to its secular character.

USA's ennui

Even the independent bipartisan United States Commission on International Religious Freedom expressed ennui on the law—then on the anvil. According to a press note released on December 09, the bill amounted to a "dangerous turn in the wrong direction" and ran "contrary to the secular values enshrined in India's Constitution". The Commission also said that if the bill passes, the US government "should consider sanctions against the home minister (Amit Shah) and other principal leadership."

Fascism unmasked

Obviously, Modi followed Hitler and Mussolini's fascist play book, dot for dot. Fear, terror and intimidation are their favourite fascist tools. Modi wants to create fear so that his incompetence and dismal economic performance remains out of focus. Fascist ideology envisions a regimented nation in grip of a totalitarian ruler. It extirpates everything inimical to monolithism. Fascists abhor a free-thinking civil society, political dissent, brave

journalists, fearless academics and independent judiciary.

Apag from German and Italian history

Five-yearly censuses took place from 1871 onwards in the newly-founded united Germany under Chancellor Otto von Bismarck. The 1930 census was postponed due to the Great Depression. Adolf Hitler began the census shortly after seizing power on April 12, 1933. It was a huge enterprise without computers. By the end of 1939, all orthodox Jews had been identified, pinpointed to their abodes, twice over. The purpose of Census was to first locate the Jews (67 million, or one percent of the populace) and then "cleanse" them. The Citizenship and Denaturalisation Law of July 1933 empowered Nazi Reich to divest the "undesirable" of citizenship. The Jews, even in professional services were outlawed, and pauperized by seizing their belongings. The object of both the 1933 and 1939 censuses was to isolate Jews both in the German heartland and the occupied territories before they were ghettoised, deported and eventually liquidated.

Hitler's fascist comrade Benito Mussolini too introduced a racial census for both the Jews and the Roma people of Italy. The headcount enabled Mussolini to initiate xenophobic laws in 1938.

Unconstitutional

The religion-based amendment may be in keeping with Bharatya Janata Party's manifesto, but it violates the Indian Constitution. Indian parliament enacted the Citizenship Act in 1955. It did not lay down religion as a criterion. But, the newly-enacted Citizenship Amendment Bill, 2019 does. It amended certain provisions of the 1955 Act.

Towards a Hindu Rashtra

Almost a hundred years back, Savarkar scribbled these words on the walls of a prison, later published in 1923 in his book on Hindutva. "With India for their basis of operation, for their Fatherland and for their Holy land ... bound together by ties of a common blood and common culture (Hindus) can dictate their terms to the whole world." He envisioned inevitable civil war with Muslims. So, he exhorted Hindus to join the British Army, not to fight fascism, but to prepare for the eventuality. He declared Muslims and Christians could never be loyal citizens. Not all those who are residents are a part of the nation, and not all outside the territory are outside the nation.

Where should the excluded go?

Muslims in India are already ghettoized, not 'termites' on economy as Amit Shah thinks. Islam did away with caste

superiority. Yet, Muslims in India could not remain immune from Hindu caste-system. They are divided into *ashraf* (Muslims of foreign lineage) and *ajlaf* (local converts). Some scholars use another category, *arzal*, to denote the Muslim who converted from the lowest strata of society (*bhanghi*, *doom*, *choora* or *sweeper*). Would Amit Shah detain them in internment/concentration camps akin to those in Germany? For how long? Could Bangladesh, already under Rohingya burden, or India retain the stateless people under international covenants,

deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment, not even citizen's rights?

Kashmir under Hindutva citizenship

The laws in the Occupied state grant hereditary (*pushtini*) certificates to its citizens. As such, only the hereditary residents are entitled to express their voice in a plebiscite to be held to determine future fate of the disputed state. To scuttle UN mandate and to dilute the demography, Modi government has decided to grant domicile certificates to even non-Kashmiris.

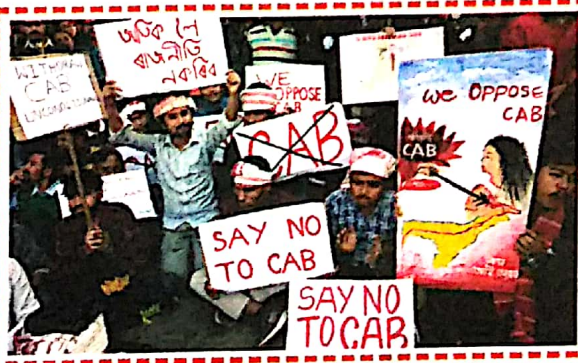
Conclusion

Muslims in India are highly stratified. The upper affluent layer is sold out to ruling party. They never expressed sympathy with Kashmiris under Indian yoke.

Similarly, Christians are indifferent to Hindutva onslaught on Indian Muslims. The minorities need to coalesce to avert extinction.

The Muslims should learn from the Christians. To ruling BJP's chagrin, Christians are the second most-educated religious group in India after the Jains. Today, the Christians live all across India, particularly in the South and the southern shore, the Konkan Coast, and north-eastern India. They include former and current chief ministers, governors and chief election commissioners. The paradox of belonging to Islam, a religion that is premised on the notion of equality, and at the same time imbibing local traits which affirm inequality has to be admitted. Muslims are segmented into different status categories on the basis of income, occupation, education and lineage.

It is the Muslim himself who can change his lot by following Islam in full. They should resist stratification and demand equality from their community. The Muslim world at large should help them with funds. Unless they are united, they can't survive Hindutva aggression, manifested in legislation or in social life. ■





The Lahore Process

Challenges and Opportunities



The first round of the Lahore Process was held on June 22, 2019, at Bhurban, Murree in which heads of various Afghan political parties participated. The participants of the conference discussed the internal challenges to the restoration of peace in Afghanistan. It was followed by a roundtable conference in Serena Hotel, Islamabad on January 14, 2020. A 13-member delegation of Afghan parliamentarians, which was headed by Muhammad Muhaqqiq, head of Hizb-e-Wahdat-e-Mardam Afghanistan, participated. Eleven delegates shared their thoughts regarding the ongoing peace talks with the Taliban. A handful of experts of Afghan affairs and ex-diplomats from Pakistan were also present.

They discussed various issues and suggested ways for increasing people-to-people contacts with Afghans. The Lahore Peace Process aims to identify the internal challenges to the peace talks. It offers opportunities to the Afghans to share their perspectives, and to find out practicable ways for attaining long-lasting peace in Afghanistan. Although there have been many processes, e.g. Istanbul Process, Kabul Process, Moscow Process, Murree Peace Talks, Quadrilateral Coordination Group, the ongoing Khalilzad's mission and many other informal

The process for bringing peace to Afghanistan has entered into yet another series of talks, dialogues and negotiations under the title "Lahore Process," with a hope to materialize the notion of "Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process" in the war-torn country. This time, the process is not under the auspices of a government but has been started by a Lahore-based think tank, Lahore Center for Peace Research (LCPR), led by Shamshad Ahmad, former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan.

discussions in Riyadh, Oslo and Urumqi, yet the Lahore Process seems to be different in nature and, owing to its way of perceiving the issue, it may prove to be more effective than earlier processes.

The Afghan enigma has become a protracted issue of human rights in the present-day civilized world. The lives and fundamental rights of Afghans are at risk due to persistent war and militancy. Article 4 of the constitution of Afghanistan recognizes 14 ethnicities in Afghanistan—Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, Uzbek, Turkman, Baluch, Pachaie, Nuristani, Aymaq, Arab, Qirghiz, Qizilbash, Gujur, Brahwui and other tribes. Each ethnic group has its own distinct culture, history and approach towards governance structure in Afghanistan. Although peace

dialogue with the Afghan Taliban is on the way, the ethnic groups not mentioned in the said article feel themselves sidelined and ignored and it may pose serious challenges to the success of these talks. These ethnicities have a considerable say in Afghan politics since Karzai era, and they demand a dignified space in the future political structure of their country. There are some who have serious concerns over the peace dialogue only with the Taliban; they are of the opinion that the principles of coexistence should also be stressed along with political

and cultural activities. Moreover, there are different sectarian divisions inside the Afghan society, and adopting the notion of religious pluralism may also be a tool to strengthen the bond. Along with religious pluralism, political pluralism and inclusiveness in the process may be another way to fortify the process. Acknowledgement of each other's status will further strengthen the process that would help in reaching a practicable conclusion in this regard. Manipulation and change in mindset is need of the hour for success of Afghan peace process. The history of Afghanistan suggests that war during the last 30 years has been fought to gain control over the affairs of the state of Afghanistan. Each Afghan ethnic group has its own stance and no one can dare to show oneself as the sole representative of Afghanistan, even the elected president Ashraf Ghani may not be recognized by Afghans as their sole representative. For the restoration of long-lasting peace, justice should be done to each ethnic group. Based on their population, they should enjoy their liberty and freedom of thought, expression and representation in the national fora.

Another important internal challenge to the Afghan peace process is the continuation of war on Afghan land. Many Afghan stakeholders believe that for success of peace talks, the first step is the ceasefire which was also demanded by the Americans several times. Furthermore, civil society has deepened its roots in Afghanistan and, Afghan women now demand their fundamental rights and due status in national state of affairs—and it may be a rewarding step for boosting Afghanistan's national image. Regarding the role of Pakistan in bringing peace to Afghanistan, there were many who blamed Pakistan of supporting Afghan Taliban and trying to control Afghanistan.



However, owing to persistent facilitation and support for an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, those very people are now asking Pakistan to play its pivotal role in restoring peace and stability in Afghanistan. They are now thankful for Pakistan's support against the aggression of USSR and for liberating Afghanistan from the Soviet atrocities and granting refuge to more than four million Afghans for more than four decades. Pakistan and Afghanistan

have cultural similarities, societal cohesion and religious bonds and, perhaps most importantly, the geographical connectivity, thus providing former the prime importance for its decisive role in the peace dialogue. Pakistan's Afghan policy has traditionally been driven by the concept of non-interference and inclusiveness of all Afghans, and the country is still committed to the cause. A peaceful Afghanistan is the most earnest desire of Pakistan and it has sincere motivation and credentials to facilitate, support and enhance the peace initiatives at all levels.

In future, the Lahore Process may have to face many challenges, and explore numerous opportunities, regarding the success of Afghan peace process. There are some forces that will definitely try to derail the process as was the case with Murree Peace Talks; however, vigilance and commitment on the part of Pakistan can defeat the evil eyes. We have seen that Afghans pledged in Haram Shareef and took oath on Holy Quran to not fight against each other but fighting and bloodshed continued. Nevertheless, the time has changed, and the priorities have also been transformed. The new generation of Afghans has the responsibility to take the lead and avoid the mistakes their forefathers made. □

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Turkish ATTACK on Syria

Shamsa Khalid

The unending conflict in Syria is soon going to enter its tenth year. This long civil war is tussled between the Ba'athist Syrian Arab Republic led by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad along with domestic and foreign allies (especially Russia), and various domestic and foreign forces opposing both the Syrian government and each other in varying groupings (USA, Turkey, Kurds, et al).

Foreign powers got involved in this conflict to pursue their own interests. The United States entered there on humanitarian grounds when Assad regime launched chemical strike on public, and to end ISIS. The US president recently announced to withdraw American troops from Syria, claiming that they had accomplished their task of completely defeating the ISIS.

Following this order, on 7th of October last year, the US forces started pulling out, especially from areas bordering Turkey.

Russia-Syria Ties

Russia and Syria have always been strong allies in all major realms. Syria is important for Russia because of trade, political and other reasons which included stopping the proliferation of terrorism within Russian zone of influence. But, Russian support to Assad regime has been mostly logistical and political. Russia always made the bid for no military intervention in Syria but after chemical attack in Ghouta, it convinced Assad to dismantle chemical weapons. Moscow succeeded and OPCW (Organization for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) started dismantling Syrian arsenal of chemicals weapons—In 2013, OPCW was awarded Nobel Peace Prize for this work. However, through Syrian crisis, Russia got a chance to get involved in the Middle Eastern politics. Because it's the Syrian crisis on which the fate of the whole Middle East depends.

US-Russia Antagonism

Russia wants US to leave Syria and it has consistently claimed that US presence in Syria is illegal. As the United States withdraws from Syria, Russia is stepping in, running patrols to separate warring factions, striking deals and helping President Assad advance. US withdrawal is being considered a great gift for Russia because Moscow perceives US President Donald Trump's abandonment of Syria as a victory that adds greatly to its political capital.

Turkey's Stance

Turkey is anti-Assad. It has very strong and monochromatic policy towards the Syrian crisis. It helps the rebel groups to gain control and power, and to topple Assad regime while at the same time hitting ISIS for security purpose in the region. It was quick to join anti-Assad forces and also in supplying armaments to rebels. It also formed the Syrian National Council in 2011 with an aim of getting rid of Assad.

Kurdish Factor

Kurds are a large ethnic minority. After World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, the victorious Western allies made provision for a Kurdish state in the 1920 Treaty of Sevres. However, that promise was nullified three years later, when the Treaty of Lausanne set the boundaries of modern Turkey and made no such provision, leaving Kurds with minority status in their respective countries. Currently, between 25 and 35 million ethnic Kurds inhabit a mountainous region straddling Turkey, Iraq, Syria, Iran and Armenia. As an ethnic community, Kurds have long faced persecution. As a result, a militant group, the Kurdistan Militant Party (PKK), emerged to protect the Kurds and it demanded an independent state for them in Turkey—it now calls for greater autonomy in the country, though. In the 1980, a violent conflict ensued between Turkish state and the PKK. It still regularly

attacks Turkish security forces. Ankara, EU and US call PKK a terrorist group. To neutralize it, these powers established People's Protection Units (YPG) which formed an alliance with local Arab militias called the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), in 2015. Before the uprising against President Assad began in 2011, most Kurds lived in cities of Damascus and Aleppo, and in three northern areas near Turkish border—Afrin in the west, Kobane (Ain al-Arab) in the centre, and Qamishli in the east.

Turkish Attack on Syria

Turkey had long threatened to launch an operation in SDF-held territory to create a 32-km-deep "safe zone" running for 480km along the Syrian side of the border. The second aim of the Turkey was to push away YPG from its borders. On June 20, 2018, Turkey finally launched Operation Olive Branch on the ground that it was vital for its security. It also claims that it is fighting against ISIL, although this group does not exist in Afrin. US urged Turkey to exercise restraint and decided to maintain a military presence in the region for unforeseeable future. This enraged the Turkish leadership. EU also warned Turkey that its offensive would undermine Geneva peace talks. Russia, though it had pulled back from Afrin, has recently renewed its ties with the YPG, while Turkey, too, has struck defence and trade deals with Russia.

Withdrawal of US forces from Syria was a green signal to Turkey as Turkish forces immediately attacked the Kurds who were erstwhile US allies. In sending its forces into Syria, the Turkish government seemed to have four primary goals: boost Erdogan's popularity, make the establishment of a Kurdish-controlled territory in Syria impossible, destroy the YPG, and resettle Syrian refugees.

Although Kurds were the allies of the United States in their struggle with ISIS, the latter changed its policy. First, President Trump tweeted that whoever wants to fight for Kurds is friend whether it is Russia or China. Later, he said that he would destroy Turkey's economy. Then he tweeted that he had left the fate of Kurds with Bashar al-Assad to whom he called "our enemy" in the same breath. He held the opinion that Kurds didn't fight with us in WWII; they fought for their land. Russia is playing its role in settling the issue by arranging peace talks because it is now the sole problem-solver in the region. In this context, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between Turkey and Russia on northern Syria was signed in Sochi last October.

Sochi Talks

After 9 October, when Turkey launched attack against Kurds, talks were held between Russian president Vladimir Putin and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip

Erdogan in Sochi, Russia. During this rendezvous, both leaders agreed to push back Kurds from safe zone along the Turkey-Syria border. In these talks, presidents of both countries agreed on following points:

1. The two sides restate their commitment to the preservation of the political unity and territorial integrity of Syria and the protection of national security of the Turkey.
2. They emphasize their determination to combat terrorism in all forms and manifestation and to disrupt separatist agendas in the Syrian territory.
3. In this framework, the established status quo in the current operation Peace Spring area will be preserved.
4. Both sides reaffirm the importance of Adana agreement. The Russian federation will facilitate the implementation of Adana agreement in the current circumstances.
5. Starting 12:00 noon of October 23, 2019, Russian military police and Syrian border guards will enter the



Syrian side of Turkish- Syrian border, outside the area of Operation Peace Spring, to facilitate the removal of YPG elements and their weapons to the depth of 30km from the Turkish-Syrian border.

6. All YPG elements and their weapons will be removed from Manbij and Tal Rifat.

7. Both sides will take necessary measures to prevent infiltration of terrorist elements.

8. Joint effort will be launched to facilitate the return of refugees in a safe and volunteer manner.

9. A joint monitoring and verification mechanism will be established to oversee and coordinate the implementation of this memorandum.

10. The two sides will continue to work to find a lasting political solution to the Syrian conflict within the Astana Mechanism and will support the activity of the Constitutional Committee.

Conclusion

Turkey has long been expressing concerns over the attacks by the Syrian regime. Following talks between President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Russian President Vladimir Putin on Jan. 8, a new ceasefire has been announced between Damascus and the opposition groups in the Idlib province. ■



PERSECUTION OF MINORITIES IN INDIA

The Myth of 'Secular India' Busted



On 25 August 2015, at 5:38 pm, India's Press Information Bureau issued a detailed press release by its Ministry of Home Affairs. It stated: "The Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India, today released the data on Population by Religious Communities of Census 2011. The distribution is total population by six major religious communities namely, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Jain. According to the PR, "Total population in 2011 was 121.09 crores of which Hindus constituted 79.8%; Muslims 14.2%; Christians 2.3%; Sikhs 1.7%; Buddhists 0.7%; Jain 0.4%, Other Religions & Persuasions (ORP) 0.7% and Religion Not Stated 0.2%.



Muhammad Atif Sheikh

The PR also mentioned the increase or decrease in the country's population during the first decade of the current century. It said, "The proportion of Muslim population to total population has increased by 0.8 percentage point (PP) in 2011. The proportion of Hindu population to total population in 2011 has declined by 0.7 PP; the proportion of Sikh population has declined by 0.2 PP and the Buddhist population has declined by 0.1 PP during the decade 2001-2011. The said PR had another aspect which was the growth rate of population of followers of various religions. It reported: "The growth rate of population in the decade 2001-2011 was 17.7%. The growth rate of population of the different religious communities in the same period was as follows: Hindu 16.8%; Muslim 24.6%; Christian 15.5%; Sikh 8.4%; Buddhist 6.1% and Jain 5.4%."

This PR was not released as a news item rather it was

aimed to achieve some other objective, and to know those goals, we need to analyse it from two perspectives. First, since the census was conducted in 2011, what was the intention behind releasing its data after a gap of four years? Second, why this angle was conspicuously highlighted that the population of Hindus has declined while that of Muslims has seen a considerable growth? Why not one but two parameters were used to present it more elaborately?

As for the first perspective, it needs to be kept in mind that the elections to the sixteenth Lok Sabha were conducted in 9 phases from 7 April 2014 to 12 May 2014 and the results thereof were declared on 16 May 2014. As per the results, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)—of the National Democratic Alliance—achieved an absolute majority with 282 seats out of 543, and its candidate Narendra Modi took office on 26 May 2014 as the 14th prime minister of India. On the one hand, the ruling BJP has a reputation for its fervour for making and implementing anti-Muslim policies, while also having deep linkages with extremist and ultra-radical Hindu outfits and organization, on the other. And, PM Modi's hands are also tainted with the blood of innocent Muslims who were

killed in Gujarat pogrom of 2002 when he was the Chief Minister of that state. Right from the moment the BJP set its hands on power in India, it has set basically two targets: consolidate hold over power and implement Hindutva ideology.

In this backdrop, if we see the timing and contents of the said PR, it becomes evidently clear that BJP released the data, after one year of taking power, officially from a particular angle of religious affiliation only as a politico-religious card it has played with an objective to consolidate its hold over power and to create an environment that would be conducive to proliferation and implementation of Hindutva ideology.

Hence, by exploiting the said press release to its favour, the BJP used Indian media to create a sense of Malthusian fear that the number of India's Muslims will, at some point, surpass that of Hindus as the population of Hindus is decreasing while that of Muslims is increasing. But, in fact, the Muslim population has witnessed a steep decline, a fact corroborated by the following figures:

Between 1991 and 2001, the population of Indian Muslims grew by 29.64% which has declined to 24.60% during the decade 2001-2011. And, if we apply the parameter of percentage points, as used in the PR, we find that on a whole Muslim population declined by 4.92 PP between 1991 and 2011.

The BJP's Islamophobic policy of creating bogey of so-called growth of Muslim population in India paid off as it won a landslide victory in elections to the 17th Lok Sabha, which were conducted in seven phases from 11 April 2019 to 19 May 2019, by winning 303 seats in the 543-strong lower house of the Indian parliament. This overwhelming victory also gave Modi a conviction to enforce such policies and laws that may help in making the dream of radical and extremist Hindu outfits of making India a Hindu Rashtra come true. The pivotal step in this regard was to increase, maintain and organize data related to Hindu population in India. One may ask a question here that when Hindus constitute 79.8% of India's total population—and minorities only 20.2%—then why the BJP government is doing so? Answer to this question warrants an in-depth study of various aspects and backgrounds.

Let's start with India's claim of being a secular country. In this regard, US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) released a report titled "Constitutional and Legal Challenges Faced by Religious Minorities in India" in February 2017. The report says:

"India terms itself a "secular" country; however, its concept of the term is vitally different from the comparable American idea of secularism—which requires complete segregation of church and state and also the French model of *laïcité* which guarantees the neutrality of the state toward religious beliefs, and the complete isolation of the religious and public spheres." It further

says, "The preamble of the Indian Constitution disallows the formation of a theocratic state and precludes the state from identifying itself with, or otherwise favouring, any particular religion. Additionally, the constitution encompasses several provisions that emphasize complete legal equality of its citizens irrespective of their religion and creed and prohibit any kind of religion-based



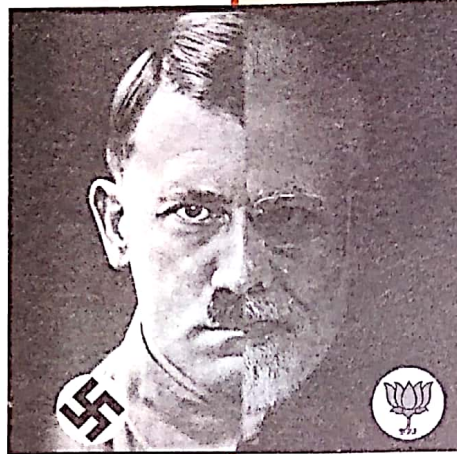
discrimination between them. But neither in laws nor in practice does there exist any separation between religion and the state; in fact, the two often intervene in each other's domain within legally prescribed and judicially settled parameters."

These revelations in this report and the Hindutva ambitions of the incumbent government in India have busted the myth of "secular India". The government is not only actively involved in managing the affairs of Hindu temples but is also making decisions to propagate and spread the Hindu religion.

Second aspect is the glaring contradictions in the Indian constitution itself. For instance, in its Article 25 (1), the Constitution guarantees that "all persons are equally entitled to freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess, practise and propagate religion." But, the explanation of clause 2(b) of the very article denies this right as it says, "In sub-clause (b) of clause (2), the reference to Hindus shall be construed as including a reference to persons professing the Sikh, Jaina or Buddhist religion, and the reference to Hindu religious

institutions shall be construed accordingly."

In its annual report for 2017, the USCIRF reported: "...As a result, members of these faiths are subject to Hindu Personal Status Laws, and they are denied access to social services or employment and educational preferences available to other religious minority communities." Moreover, in articles 29, 30, 350A and 350B, the words like 'minority', 'minorities' and 'minority groups' have been used, but with no explanation thereof. Another contradiction is that the constitution explicitly describes those belonging to Sikh, Jain or Buddhist religions as Hindus but the country established a Ministry of Minority Affairs in 2006, the apex body for the central government's regulatory and developmental programmes for the minority religious communities in India. It notified Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and Jains as minority communities in The Gazette of India, on 27 January 2014, under Section 2(c) of the National Commission for Minorities Act, 1992. Furthermore, data related to these six religious communities have been collected and released separately whereas according to the "The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950," which was amended in 1990, "... no person who professes a religion different from the Hindu, the



The term Hindutva is used to refer to the notion of extremist Hindu nationalism. It means it is a violent ideology that calls for Hindu dominance. Vinayak Damodar Savarkar coined this term in 1923 and it is vociferously championed by the Hindu nationalist volunteer organisations Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Hindu Sena. In simple words, Hindutva has three fundamental principles: (1) Hindus are a nation and only they have the right to rule India (Hindustan); (2) Minorities like Christians and Muslims are suspected of having lesser loyalty to India than Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains; and (3) Division of Hindutva on the basis of caste threatens Hindu unity.

Sikh or the Buddhist religion shall be deemed to be a member of a scheduled caste."

Third aspect is that the enumeration of three big groups of Indian population, i.e. Scheduled Tribes (also called Adivasi), Scheduled Castes (sometimes called Dalits and untouchables) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs), can lay bare India's claim that India is a Hindu-majority

country. Results of 2011 census show that the population of Scheduled Tribes was more than 145 million—8.63% of country's total population. Similarly, Scheduled Castes were over 201 million in number (16.63%). Moreover, as per 'Handbook of Health and Welfare Statistics' (released in September 2018), the population of OBCs in India in 2011-12 accounted for 44% of country's total population—minorities on a whole constituted only 20.2%.

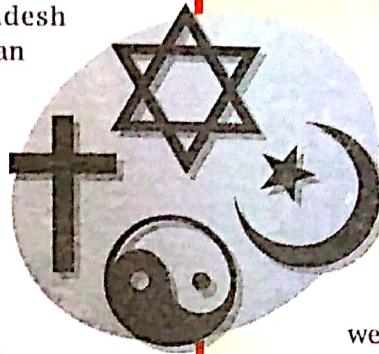
So, in this backdrop, having an overwhelming majority of those having extremist Hindutva ideology in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha—two houses of the Indian parliament—is indispensable to erasing India's secular identity and making it a Hindu Rashtra. And, for that, making alterations and amendments to the country's constitution is inevitable. Take, for instance, the case of Scheduled Tribes. These tribes were never enumerated as Hindus in any census carried out in pre-Independence India; rather all their data was collected in separate columns. Results of 1941 census, which are easily available on the internet, evidence this fact. India's Ministry of Tribal Affairs recognizes more than 104 million people, who are out of the official caste system, as Scheduled Tribes (indigenous groups) and most of them follow Animism or other traditional beliefs, but in official census figures, they have been shown as Hindus. As a result, in this census, as much

as 80.39% population of Scheduled Tribes has been considered Hindu while 9.92% Christians and 1.79% Muslims. Moreover, the proportion of Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains has been mentioned in the population data of Scheduled Tribes but Animism has not been mentioned at all. So, does it mean that a large chunk of this population abandoned the religious beliefs of their forefathers and converted to Hinduism? It seems absurd and ridiculous! But, for the sake of argument, let's accept



that it actually happened. Then, what about the fact that seven out of 29 States and Union Territories of India have laws on religious freedom—Orissa (1967); Chhattisgarh (1968); Madhya Pradesh (1968); Arunachal Pradesh (1978); Gujarat (2003); Himachal Pradesh (2006) and Rajasthan (2006)—which ban religious conversion carried out by force, fraud, or other inducements? Isn't treating these tribes as Hindus a violation of these laws? What is the legality of this mass fraud committed only to show the numerical majority of Hindus in India?

Let's analyse religious conversion in India from another angle. As per the Constitutional Order of 1950, Scheduled Castes shall consist



Ghar Wapsi

It is relatively a new term coined in the recent years. It refers to making efforts for forced conversions of people belonging to other religions to Hinduism. Various organizations like Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP), Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bajrang Dal are actively involved in this program. The reason they give for these forced re-conversions to Hinduism is that the forefathers of those who currently follow Islam and Christianity were Hindus and they were forced to relinquish Hinduism; therefore, they should revert to the religion of their forefathers.

only of Hindus, Sikhs and Buddhists and as per Article 341 of the Indian Constitution there were, by 26 October 2017, as many as 1284 scheduled castes in India. And, to make them avoid religious conversion, the law gives them some so-called privileges (Scheduled Castes have been given a quota of 15% in admissions to institutions of higher education, and government jobs), but if they convert, they can no longer enjoy those privileges. However, if they reconvert to Hinduism, these privileges stand restored. (I have used the word 'so-called' because how a societal system that is so enchained in its cruel caste system and that does not even recognize Dalits as humans can give them privileges?) The caste system divides Hindus into four main categories: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and the Shudras. It further divides 3000 other important castes into an additional 25000 sub-castes. Outside of this Hindu caste system were the achhoots—the Dalits or the untouchables. A report published in Times of India on

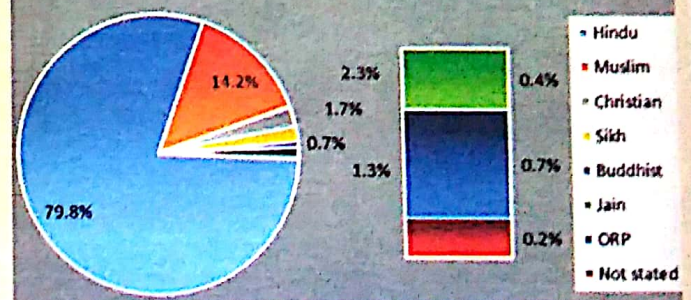
Scheduled Tribes

'Scheduled Tribes' (also called Adivasi) is a constitutional term to describe the aboriginal or native inhabitants of India. They live in abject poverty and often face discrimination. The Government of India has designated a number of Adivasi as Scheduled Tribes (ST)—a term which got currency from the Government of India Act, 1935. The criterion followed for specification of a community, as scheduled tribes are indications of primitive traits, distinctive culture, geographical isolation, shyness of contact with the community at large, and backwardness. The number of STs recorded in the Central List was 747 by 31st of December 2017.

Dec 7, 2009, read: "In a first-of-its-kind study on a large scale, representing 98,000 Dalits across 1,655 villages in Gujarat, it comes out that 97% respondents feel they have 'no entry' at certain places in their own villages, including a temple or where a religious ceremony is taking place." It, in fact, means that Dalits have to face religious discrimination at all levels and it is an undeniable reality that this discrimination, poverty and violent attacks on them have made their lives miserable and wretched. As per USCIRF International Religious Freedom report, on average, every week nearly 13 Dalits are killed, 5 houses of them demolished, 3 Dalit women are raped and 11 Dalits are physically abused—a Dalit is subjected to a crime every 18 minutes. This state of affairs is the reason why Dalits are growingly converting to other religions.

The reason behind the growing rate of conversions is not that Dalits want to follow another religion or code of life but because they completely reject Hinduism which, to Hindu nationalists and radical outfits, is against their dream of a Hindu Rashtra where the upper caste has the

Population by Religion (Census 2011)

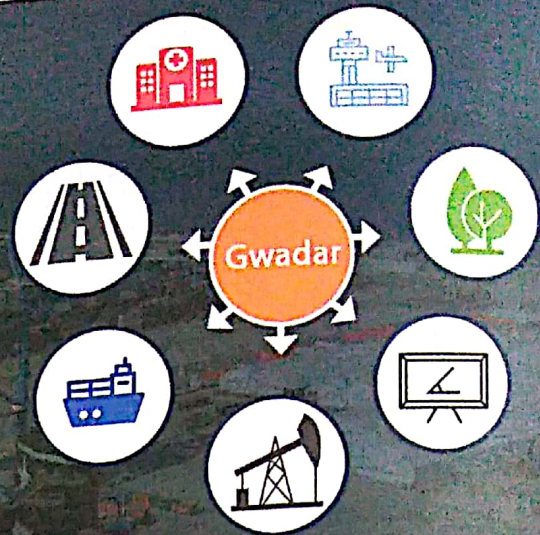


supreme authority over state affairs. This is why the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which is a right-wing party with close ideological and organisational links to Hindu nationalist organisations like Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), is actively working to halt Dalit conversions. Although the Indian Constitution protects Indian citizens' right to choose and practice any religion they want, the BJP enacted anti-conversion laws in various states it rules. In 2013, in Gujarat's Junagadh when around 60,000 Dalits and members of other lower castes converted to Buddhism, the BJP government of Gujarat ordered an investigation and arrested local Dalit-Buddhist leaders. In 2014, in Madhya Pradesh, when four Dalits converted to Islam due to caste humiliation and oppression, the police arrested them. ■

...to be continued

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Importance and Future Prospects of Gwadar Port



Dr Sajid Mehmood Shahzad of its vitality for regional and extraregional key players. This port has the potential to acquire the status of a centrepiece as a gate to



Strait of Hormuz.

Importance

Located at the entrance of the Persian Gulf, about 460 kilometres from Karachi, Gwadar has immense geo-strategic significance on many accounts. It has the potential to be developed into a full-fledged regional hub and a trans-shipment port. Considering the geo-economic imperative of the regional changes, the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Ports Master Plan studies

considered an alternate to the Persian Gulf Ports to capture the transit trade of the CARs, as well as the trans-shipment trade of the region. Both Karachi Port and Port Bin Qasim were found unattractive to major shipping lines due to the lesser depth and being away from the main shipping routes, the limitations of draft for mother ships and large bulk oil carriers and the comparative long turnaround times. The ADB studies, however, considered Gwadar to have the most advantageous location for such an

alternative port in the region, which could handle mother ships and large oil tankers in due course owing to its specific depth.

i. Geopolitical Importance

In Indian Subcontinent, India was the world's first dry dock through which trade and culture was carried across the sea. The seafarers took Indian silk, spices and artefacts to East Africa, the Gulf and even beyond. But

The pragmatic facets like geography and history have always imprinted the demographic mosaic and development of a civilisation. The civilisations have always developed along the waters. The waters have been used as trade route since long, and the modern trade has further enhanced the need of trade through waters. Pakistan being a gateway to the strategically important 'Strait of Hormuz' in the Indian Ocean has always been a centrepiece for regional politics. The emergence of Gwadar Port as a vibrant regional economic hub has caused the regional and extra-regional powers to develop strategic and infrastructural development with Gwadar Port to reach the energy-rich Central Asian Republics (CARs). Sea ports provide a vital link to a country with the outside world. These ports can become a main hub of commercial activity and can give a substantial rise to the economy of the country. With an area of 12,637 sq kms, Gwadar Port yields

"If we see this whole region, it is like a funnel. The top of the funnel is this wide area of Central Asia and also China's western region. And this funnel gets narrowed on through Afghanistan and Pakistan and the end of this funnel is Gwadar port. So this funnel, futuristically, is the economic funnel of this whole region"

— Pervaz Musharraf
Former President of Pakistan

with the arrival of Mughals, India rapidly began to limit its contact with sea. This was to have tragic consequences, which ultimately led to the conquest of the Subcontinent by the British. But once again the old desire of Central Asian Republics and that of China of having "access to warm waters" is soon going to materialize through the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and by construction of Gwadar Port.

Geographically, the CPEC connects through the 3000-km road and rail link including the Kashghar in western China to Pakistan's southwestern part of Gwadar (Balochistan). This is a multifaceted deal which involves the following areas of cooperation.

- Coal-fired power plants.
- Hydroelectric and wind-generated power.
- Solar power stations.
- Coal supplies.

This corridor is also expected to help some of the most underdeveloped areas of Pakistan by reducing poverty and generating job opportunities while, on the other hand, it would also considerably reduce the transportation time of goods and energy for Chinese products. Currently, export of goods from China to the Middle East and Africa via Strait of Malacca takes about 45 days that could be reduced to fewer than 10 days if transported through Gwadar Port.

In a broader view, the CPEC will closely connect Central Asia, West Asia and Gulf states through energy and economic cooperation. China has been showing the signs to emerge as a super economic power of the world in the recent years. Goods sent by sea have to travel more than 10,000 miles to reach Chinese ports on the country's eastern seaboard and then have to be transported 3,000 miles overland across China to reach markets in western China. As compared to this, Gwadar port is located on a distance of only 2500 km from China, and the port is operational for the whole year because of the hot waters here.

Therefore, the interest of China in the development of Gwadar port is, in fact, in terms of its economic value. More so, Gwadar being near to Iranian border will provide port facilities to Central Asia as well.

Presently, Dubai is the hub of business not only for Gulf but also for rest of the region including South Asia, Central Asian States, Africa and China, simultaneously. Dubai, therefore, acts as role model port for the countries in the region, to follow the suit in harnessing the gains of international sea bound traffic to traverse through oil-rich region, thus inevitably bring prosperity to the people

of the neighbouring states. Fortunately, Gwadar proves to be the nearest and, in fact, more cost-effective port from many aspects. Thus, one can conclude, Gwadar port will grow beyond the economic glory not only for Pakistan but for the region as well.

ii. Geostrategic Importance

Gwadar is the closest port to southern Afghanistan, a region that includes the country's second largest city Kandahar. A highway linking Gwadar to Chaman on the Pak-Afghan border may help facilitate the flow of imports into southern and central Afghanistan by cutting road transport costs. Xingjian lies 4,500 km from China's east coast but just 2,500 km from Gwadar. This will make it possible for China to route some of its external trade through Gwadar port.

It was evident that countries having apprehensions about the strategic co-operation between Pakistan and China would be unhappy over the development of Gwadar port. Many analysts have been placing more emphasis on Gwadar's strategic importance, especially in the Chinese future energy security strategy, and consider it a threat to their interests.

Construction of Gwadar has ringed a bell about China's maritime aspirations. China's growing interest and influence from the South China Sea through the Indian Ocean and onto the Arabian Gulf has been described as a "String of Pearls" approach that potentially could present the United States with complex regional challenges. In such assessments, loaded with strategic connotations, the

commercial aspect of these facilities and expanding Chinese global economic interests are deliberately underplayed to portray an alarming situation. There are, however, some scholars, who have justified Chinese cooperation with Pakistan in the development of Gwadar port, while recognizing both countries' legitimate economic interests, also suggest that it should not be used by the Chinese for military purposes for the sake of regional stability.

While focussing on the strategic importance of Gwadar, most analysts tend to ignore the fact that Gwadar is a Pakistani port, though built with Chinese assistance and loans, and that Pakistan is a sovereign state which takes decisions according to its national interests. For Pakistan, Gwadar is indeed an addition to the Karachi Port Complex, as it has created yet another commercial hub on the country's west coast.

iii. Geoeconomic Importance

With the inauguration of first phase of the Gwadar deep sea port on 20 March 2007, another milestone was added



to the emerging economic relations between Pakistan and China. Pakistan conceived Gwadar Port, while realizing the potential of its strategic geographic location at the crossroads of three sub-regional systems—South Asia, West Asia and Central Asia—all envisioned creating a trade corridor for China, Central Asia and Afghanistan. Net assessments of the growing energy requirements of the rapidly developing economies of China and India have further strengthened Pakistan's concept of serving not only as a trade corridor but also as an energy corridor. To realize the potential of becoming a "Trade and Energy Corridor" (TEC), Pakistan's leadership in the past few years has primarily focussed on China and also other neighbouring countries to join Pakistan's endeavours for creating a "trade and energy corridor". Saudi Arabia is also looking into the possibilities of using this corridor for energy supplies to China. While the importance and usefulness of Pakistan's TEC is valid for many countries. Moreover, the infrastructure for TEC requires multi-billion dollar financial commitments, for which China has the interest as well as the capacity.

Future Prospects of Gwadar Port

i. Gwadar as a Transit Port

One major objective of realizing Gwadar Port is to facilitate and attract transit trade of Central Asian Republics by providing dedicated, efficient and cost-effective port facilities. The myth of expected high volume transit traffic from CARs and Afghanistan is considered a driving force to develop Gwadar as a deep sea port. With this perspective, the construction of Gwadar port has been justified and merits following:

- The transit trade of CARs at present is partly handled at UAE ports from where it is trans-shipped to Bunder Abbas and onward by land/rail route to CARs. This involves double handling at UAE and Iranian ports. A hub port at Gwadar will offer direct shipment to and from CARs through land route.
- The transit sea trade of Afghanistan is presently handled at Karachi Port, which shall be diverted to Gwadar, when the land route is developed.
- The landlocked countries of Central Asia located in the north of Pakistan constitute a large potential market for Gwadar Port for handling their maritime import and export trade.
- Serve as a gateway to the cargo destined for landlocked countries such as Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan.

ii. Traffic Assessment

The volume of traffic for containers and general cargo has been assessed through the following two studies.

- M/S Giffords & Partners of UK carried out in 1993.
- National Ports Master Plan study by Posford Duviviers UK in 1996. Figures of both the above studies have been averaged in the PC-1 for arriving at the final figures shown in Table 1. Chinese Consultants did a fresh study in year

2002. However, the results of their study did not change the above forecast figures as mentioned in this table.

iii. Gwadar as Trans-shipment Port

Yet another objective of Gwadar Port is to serve as mother port for the neighbouring ports, which are not capable to receive mother ships. This is all about trans-shipment traffic. Gwadar is located strategically close to main shipping routes and is planned to handle mother ships and larger oil tankers in due course. However, competition is likely from Salalah Port (Oman) for the trans-shipment trade. The Chinese designers Fourth Harbour Engineering Investigation and Design Institute in the basic design report of 2003 have proposed that Gwadar, when fully developed as a port, has the potential to attract a minimum of 100,000 TEUs for trans-shipment through feeder services. The conservative figure of 165,000 TEUs will gradually increase to the limiting value of 275,000 TEUs by the year 2025.

Gwadar is likely to emerge as a regional hub of economic activities due to its ideal location at the tip of the Strait of Hormuz/Persian Gulf. It has the capability to be a vital link

**Table 1 Traffic assessment for Gwadar Port
Traffic Assessment (000 tons)**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Afghanistan					
1. General Cargo	113	135	150	166	184
2. Containers (000TEUs)	8	9	10	11	12
Central Asian Republics					
1. General Cargo	530	577	622	690	750
2. Containers (000TEUs)	47	54	58	61	65
Total					
1. General Cargo	643	712	772	856	934
2. Containers (000TEUs)	55	63	68	72	77

to China, Afghanistan and CARs, thus attracting trans-shipment trade with over 20 countries including Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq and Iran. These countries may open their warehouses in Gwadar for the export of goods. The port complex will provide facilities of warehouses, trans-shipment, transit and coastal trade, commercial and industrial openings for international import-export trade.

It is worth mentioning that Dubai, Fujairah and Khorfakhan are thriving on trans-shipment business. The factual position is that the ports of UAE, referred to above, faced similar circumstances as Gwadar is facing today. It was the aggressive approach of UAE authorities to capture the market with which the said ports managed to offset their geographical weakness. Dubai had an added advantage of having its own base cargo which helped it to develop the trans-shipment trade in its waters, but ports like Fujairah and Khorfakhan generally relied on trans-shipment business only. In fact, these ports could overcome their weaknesses with careful planning and taking care of other aspects of the port business. In the

light of above discussion, it is safe to forecast that Gwadar port can be a viable option in the long run. In the absence of communication infrastructure, Gwadar can be used as trans-shipment port by careful planning and aggressive marketing. In the meantime, the efforts to provide road and rail links to CARs should continue.

iv. Gateway to Central Asian States

Gwadar port has substantial trade prospects which will be multiple after linkages with Central Asian Region are developed. The total population of this region is around 65 million, which is distributed amongst 6 states, of which Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan, have close geographical proximity with Pakistan, and they will be the potential users of Gwadar port. The present total foreign trade of the area is estimated to be US\$20 billion with US\$12 billion of exports. The total international trade in terms of weight and volume is approximately 80 million freight tons. The main items and commodities of trade brought in from various ports are all kinds of consumer goods, electronic items and garments. Export, our main focus of attention, includes cotton, metal ores, machinery, gas and oil.

The road distance from Kushka in Turkmenistan to Gwadar is 1200 km whereas the nearest Black Sea port of Odessa in Ukraine is approximately 3400 km away from Central Asian states. Thus, Gwadar obviously becomes the most viable option available with the CARs.

A 500-km-long highway connecting Gwadar with CARs via Panjgur, Chagai and Rabat, up to Herat is, therefore, being planned.

v. Trade and Energy Corridor (TEC)

The new leadership of Pakistan has primarily focused on China and also other neighbouring countries to join Pakistan's endeavours for creating a "Trade and Energy Corridor" (TEC). Moreover, the infrastructure for TEC requires multi-billion dollar financial commitments for which Saudi Arabia, UAE and China have the interest as well as the capacity. Feasibility studies are being carried out for laying a railway track and a pipeline along the KKH up to the Chinese border. Saudi Arabia, reportedly, is also looking into the possibilities of using this corridor for energy supplies to China.

Pakistan, with the strong conviction that it can exploit its geographic advantage, has begun to take initial steps in the direction of creating the relevant infrastructure for the TEC. The entire concept of the TEC revolves around the successful operation of Gwadar port and timely construction of the affiliated infrastructural facilities for trade and energy supplies. It is pertinent to mention that Iranian port Chabahar offers comparatively equal transit route and commercial interest to capitalize on the opportunity that may generate a commercial rivalry. In fact, some road network in Afghanistan has recently been developed with Indian funding, which may lead to providing access to Chabahar. It is likely to attract CARs towards gaining access to warm waters through Iran. Such a scenario would lead to commercial competition with port offering better international standards and efficient cargo handling. But keeping in view the depth issue in Gwadar, there is a big advantage to Gwadar port which no other port in the region enjoys. ■

Gwadar: trade hub or military asset?



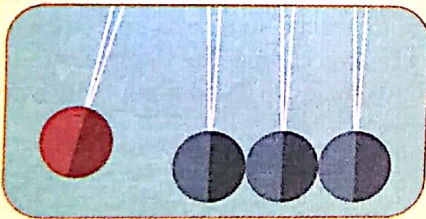
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Newton's Laws of Motion

According to Newton's First Law, "Everybody continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed upon it." This is also known as the law of inertia; it simply means that an object tends to stay still, or stay in motion in a straight line, unless it is pushed or pulled. This law is an expression in words of a fundamental property of motion called the conservation of linear momentum. Mathematically, the momentum of an object is its mass multiplied by its velocity.

According to Newton's Second Law, "The change of motion is proportional to the motive force impressed and is made in the direction of the right line in which that force is impressed." This is also known as the law of force, and it defines force as the change in the amount of motion, or momentum, of an object. Mathematically, the force of an object is its mass multiplied by its acceleration.

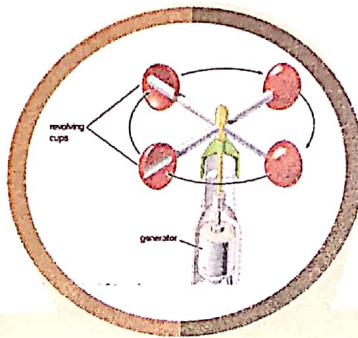
According to Newton's Third Law, "To every action, there is always opposed an equal reaction: or the mutual actions of two bodies upon each other are always equal and directed to contrary parts." It means that to exert a force on an object, the thing doing the exerting must experience a force of equal strength in exactly the opposite direction. This law explains, for example, why an ice skater goes backward when she pushes another skater forward.

**What is an aerosol?**

Many people, when they hear the word "aerosol," think of a chemical aerosol spray from a can of air freshener or hair spray. The word actually applies to any solid or liquid particles suspended in air. Because they are so small, aerosols tend to float (e.g., clouds), though like everything else they are subjected to gravity, falling at a rate of about four inches (10 centimeters) every 24 hours, unless washed away more quickly by rain.



Absolute zero is the theoretical temperature at which all substances have zero thermal energy. Originally conceived as the temperature at which an ideal gas at constant pressure would contract to zero volume, absolute zero is of great significance in thermodynamics and is used as the fixed point for absolute temperature scales. Absolute zero is equivalent to 0°K , -459.67°F , or -273.15°C . The velocity of a substance's molecules determines its temperature; the faster the molecules move, the more volume they require, and the higher the temperature becomes. The lowest actual temperature ever reached was two-billionth of a degree above absolute zero ($2 \times 10^{-9}\text{K}$) by a team at the Low Temperature Laboratory in the Helsinki University of Technology, Finland, in October 1989.

How is "absolute zero" defined?

Wind speed is measured with a device called an anemometer, which was an invention of English physicist Robert Hooke (1635–1703). The most commonly used type is the rotating cup anemometer, which uses three or four small cups that spin around a central pole. Modern anemometers of this sort work using electricity and magnets. As the cups spin, a reed switch within the central pole detects each time a magnet in a cup swings by. This sends out an electronic pulse that has been calibrated to calculate wind speed. The data is then transmitted to a weather station.

How is wind speed measured?**What is a quasar?**

The term "quasar" is short for "quasi-stellar radio source." The term came into general usage in the 1960s, when astronomers studying cosmic radio sources noticed that many of them looked like stars on photographs. Subsequent studies showed that they were not stars at all, but rather active galactic nuclei. Nowadays, the word "quasar" is often used to mean any quasi-stellar object (QSO), whether or not it emits radio waves.



M. Usman Butt

Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) was officially established in 1961, at the Belgrade Summit, hosted by President Josip Broz Tito, following the discussions that were triggered during the Afro-Asian Conference of 1955, hosted by President Sukarno, and which resulted in the adoption of the Bandung Principles that to date serve as the purposes and objectives of the policy of non-alignment, and which have governed relations between big and small nations. The first summit of the NAM was held in Belgrade, now the capital of Serbia, in 1961, with the participation of 29 countries. It is now a forum of 120 developing states that are not formally aligned with or against any major power bloc. There are also 17 countries and 10 international organizations that hold an observer status. After the United Nations, it is the largest grouping of states worldwide. The founding fathers and historic leaders of the Movement include: Joseph Broz Tito (President of Yugoslavia), Gamal Abdel Nasser (President of Egypt), Jawaharlal Nehru (Prime Minister of India), Sukarno (President of Indonesia), and Kwame Nkrumah (President of Ghana), who decided to declare it as a Movement, with a view to avoid the bureaucratic implications of an international organization. Unlike the United Nations (UN) or the Organization of American States, the NAM has no formal constitution or permanent secretariat. All members of the Non-Aligned Movement have equal weight within the organization. The movement's positions are reached by consensus in the Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government, which, by convention, convenes every three years. The administration of the organization is the responsibility of the country holding the chair, a position that rotates at every summit.



What are the Arctic and Antarctic Circles?

The circles are imaginary lines that surround the north and south poles at 66.5 degrees latitude. The Arctic Circle is a line of latitude at 66.5 degrees north of the equator and the Antarctic Circle is a line of latitude at 66.5 degrees south. Areas north of the Arctic Circle are dark for 24 hours near December 21 and areas south of the Antarctic Circle are dark for 24 hours near June 21. Almost all of the continent of Antarctica is located to the south of the Antarctic Circle.

What is a hemisphere?

A hemisphere is half of the Earth. The Earth can actually be divided into hemispheres in two ways: by the equator, and by the Prime Meridian (through Greenwich, England) at 0 degrees longitude and another meridian at 180 degrees longitude (near the location of the International Dateline in the western Pacific Ocean). The equator divides the Earth into northern and southern hemispheres. There are seasonal differences between the northern and southern hemispheres but there is no such difference between the eastern and western hemispheres. Zero and 180 degrees longitude divide the Earth into the eastern (most of Europe, Africa, Australia, and Asia) and western (the Americas) hemispheres.

Why we drink fluids after donating blood?

Blood is composed of the blood cells, namely, the red blood corpuscles (RBCs), the white blood corpuscles (WBCs) and the platelets, suspended in a clear straw-coloured fluid called plasma. The plasma contains proteins, minerals, glucose, to name a few. Plasma contributes to 55% of the blood's volume, while 40-45% is made up of cells. Of this plasma, almost 90-95% is water. Every 100 ml of blood donated contains almost 50 ml of water. An average blood donation is either 350 or 450 ml. Half of this volume is water. This is why donors are requested to drink plenty of fluids after a blood donation, so that at least the fluid compartment's loss in the body is compensated for.

For more than three decades, space agencies have been observing Earth from space and monitoring weather patterns and the global climate. The most comprehensive European earth observation programme, Copernicus, includes a satellite fleet operated by ESA. Its Sentinel satellites are monitoring Earth's environment, including CO₂ levels in the atmosphere, rising sea levels, floods, earthquakes, and rising global temperatures. However, one of the upcoming satellite missions, called the Environmental Mapping and Analysis Programme (EnMap), is promising an even greater potential when it comes to observing Earth from above. Developed by the German satellite manufacturer OHB, the mission is managed by the German Aerospace Center (DLR). EnMap uses a high-resolution hyperspectral sensor technology to monitor Earth's ecosystem. It's designed to serve as a successor to the current multispectral technology that has far lower resolution, and limited possibilities in capturing images. The new satellite captures much

more than what is visible to the naked eye. Satellite imagery also contains physical evidence about minerals and other materials on the surface, and enables scientists to draw conclusions about any potential change that may have occurred. For example, if the ocean's surface contains microplastics, a hyperspectral satellite can detect evidence of



existing polymer molecules by capturing the data contained in the reflected sunlight.

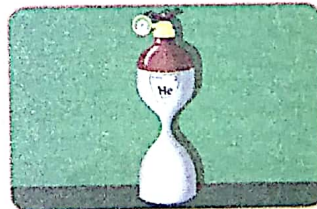
How satellites will help solve the climate crisis

The Supreme Court of Pakistan recently declared that the rule "*falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*" (false in one thing, false in everything) as an integral part of jurisprudence in criminal cases and it would be followed and applied by all courts in the country in letter and spirit. The Latin rule held that a witness who testified falsely about one matter was not credible to testify about any matter because "the presumption that the witness will declare the truth ceases as soon as it manifestly appears that he is capable of perjury" and that "faith in a witness' testimony cannot be partial or fractional". Currently, the country's courts are following the same principle.

Falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus

Why does our voice change with helium inhalation?

Our voice has unique traits much like our fingerprints. Each person's voice is decided by various factors such as lips, tongue, mouth, nasal passages, throat, and the air we breathe. Our larynx, which contains our vocal cords, is called our voice box and it contains two folded mucous membranes that vibrate when air passes between them. These vibrations travel upwards through our throat, nasal passages, mouth, tongue and lips to finally produce our unique voice. The regular air we breathe in is primarily made up of nitrogen and oxygen. But Helium is



much lighter than these two gases, which is why it is used for floating balloons. Since helium has such low density, it travels twice as fast through our vocal cords, throat and nasal passage, giving our voice a weirdly funny tone. The squeaky voice effect lasts only as long as there is helium around your vocal cords. It goes away when normal air returns in your throat. However, even though inhaling just a couple of breaths could be fine, a lot of helium intake could be dangerous. Breathing helium means you are not getting oxygen. If you continuously inhale helium, it will cause asphyxiation within a few minutes.



Why is ice slippery in nature?

It happens due to a film of water which is generated by friction, one that is far thinner than expected and much more viscous than usual water through its resemblance to the 'snow cones' of crushed ice we drink during the summer. The properties of this thin layer of water had never been measured before: its thickness remained largely unknown, while its properties, and even its very existence, were the subject of debate. What's more, since liquid water is known to be a poor lubricant, how could this liquid film reduce friction and make ice slippery? To solve this paradox, researchers developed a device equipped with a tuning fork that can "hear" the forces at work during ice gliding with remarkable precision. Thanks to this unique device, the scientists were able to clearly demonstrate for the first time that friction does indeed generate a film of liquid water. Even more unexpectedly, this film is not at all "simple water," but consists of water that is as viscous as oil, with complex visco-elastic properties. The mystery of sliding on ice can, therefore, be found in the "viscous" nature of this film of water.

EXAM PACK

What is Ecosystem?

An ecosystem by definition includes communities of organisms living in a particular space and their interactions with the environment in which they live by maintaining a balance amongst themselves and the environmental components. Thus ecosystem is the harmonious existence of balance between the living and non-living components. Ecosystems can be natural like forest, land, pond and artificial or man made

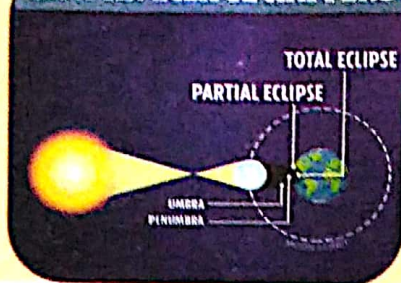


such as aquaria, dams, sanctuaries, zoos. Plants, the primary producers, trap the sun's energy and synthesize food through photosynthesis. The consumers including insects, humans and other animals are dependent on the producers for their food (energy) directly or indirectly. Finally, all the components of biota in due course of time perish and their bodies will be decomposed by microbes, and the carbon and nitrogen they contain will be recycled into the environment. In the case of the wall, light attracts insects, and they get trapped in the spider's web forming the food for the spider as well as the lizards. There is no trapping of energy by the producers. The insects feed on the plants existing in the environment external to the wall and there is no recycling of the nutrients from the excreta or other things to the wall as it happens in other ecosystems. Hence such a wall cannot be called an ecosystem by itself. But the different organisms definitely form the links of food chain and form a part of a bigger ecosystem.

Kayla Mueller

The stealth US military operation which resulted in the death of the ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi was named after Kayla Mueller, a 26-year-old former humanitarian aid worker from Prescott, Arizona. She travelled to Turkey in 2012 after her graduation and then crossed the border into Syria, on a mission to help those fleeing the civil war in the country. She was leaving a hospital run by the medical charity Doctors Without Borders in the Syrian city of Aleppo when she was kidnapped in August 2013. In February 2015, ISIS claimed that Mueller was killed when a Jordanian fighter plane bombed the building in which she was being held.

HOW AN ECLIPSE HAPPENS



What is eco-anxiety?

The feeling of being overwhelmed by the challenges of climate change and the fear about the state of the environment is called eco-anxiety. It is the helplessness that makes us see ourselves as just one insignificant entity on the planet, unable to reverse the crisis. It is also the sense that no matter how hard we work, nothing will ever be enough. We know the deteriorating climate is affecting our health but we do not know how we can stop it. To feel powerless against a supposedly impending doom shoots up stress levels and causes anxiety. In 2017, the American Psychological Association referred to the condition as eco-anxiety.

COMPACT FLUORESCENT LIGHT BULBS (CFLs)

10,000 HOURS	GAS MIXTURE
COST/HOUR	Ar and Hg
60 LUMENS/WATT	GLASS COATING
	Phosphor

CFLs create ultraviolet light by passing current through a mix of argon and mercury gas. When the UV light excites the phosphor coating, it produces visible light.

What happens to the dust we breathe in?

As we breathe in dust-laden air, our respiratory system starts its filtering and expulsion mechanism from the nose itself. The small hair present in our nose act as filters stopping bigger dust particles and smaller dust particles will be expelled by sneezing. The dust and particles adhering to dust will be washed away by the watery mucus that is secreted by the nasal mucosal layer. From here, the dust that is smaller in particle size reaches bronchi and bronchioles through wind pipe, trachea and will be expelled in the form of mucus secreted by the cells lining these air passages. The dust surrounded by the mucus will be pushed upwards with the help of cilia present in the bronchioles and bronchi and comes out in cough, spit from the throat. Still smaller particles of dust might reach the alveoli (where exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide takes place). Here macrophages take care of the defence mechanism by surrounding the minute dust particles. As there are no cilia in this region, this dust can only come out in the form of spit or it will be sent out through the digestive system. Dust can be laden with inorganics like silica dust, carbon (soot) or organic dyes, pigments or biological materials such as spores, bacteria, viruses, pollen and others. This can be injurious to our lungs.

Barometer: Barometer is used to measure atmospheric pressure. It is also known as Torricelli's Tube, after Torricelli who invented this instrument.

Wind vane/ weather cock: It is an instrument for observing the direction of the wind.

Rain gauge/Udometer/Pluviometer/Fluviograph: It is the instrument used to measure the amount of liquid precipitation over a set period.

Snow gauge: This is identical to the rain gauge but unlike the rain gauge, the snow gauge measures solid precipitation.

Anemometer: An anemometer is a device used to measure wind speed. It helps us know how fast wind is moving at a given time.


Hydrometer: Hydrometer measure the relative density or the specific gravity of liquids which is the ratio of the density of liquid to the ratio of the water density.

Hygrometer: It is an instrument used to measure the relative humidity.

Thermometer: It is an instrument used for measuring temperature.

Seismograph: Mainly used for measuring movement caused by earthquake.

Different Instruments Used In Geography



PARVEEN SHAKIR

ONE OF THE MOST FAMOUS URDU POETESS OF ALL TIME. HER ROMANTIC STYLE OF LYRICS AND COMMAND OVER LANGUAGE MAKES HER WORK WORTH READING AGAIN AND AGAIN.

HER FAMOUS BOOK "KHUSHBOO" EARNED IMMENSE RECOGNITION AND WORLDWIDE POPULARITY.

میر نے جوں جوں کہاں لوگ پہنچے ہیں کہ
نہاں ہوئے کی گواہی دیں کہ

Why was Galileo tried for heresy by the Inquisition?

The trouble began for Galileo (1564–1642) in 1613 when he published Letters on the Solar System in which he advocated the Copernican system of the universe, which proposed that Earth (along with other galactic bodies) revolves around the sun. This view ran contrary to the accepted beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church, whose doctrine was based on Ptolemy's theory that Earth was the centre of the universe and that all the planets (including the sun) revolved around it. Thus, in 1616, the Pope issued a decree declaring the Copernican system to be "false and erroneous," and Galileo was ordered not to support it.

When a new pope, Urban VIII, was coronated in 1624, Galileo travelled to Rome to make an appeal that the edict against the Copernican theory be revoked. The pope declined to do so, but he did give Galileo permission to write about the Copernican system under the

Jalalpur Canal

On December 26, Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated work on the 115-kilometer-long Jalalpur Sharif Irrigation Project (JIP)—the second largest project of Punjab after the construction of Taunsa Barrage in 1965. The canal will originate from the left bank of Rasul Barrage and will be 115 kilometers long with a designed discharge of 1,350 cusecs. It will underpass the Lahore-Islamabad Motorway (M-2) and a culvert has already been provided for that. The canal will have a distribution system of 23 distributary channels, 10 minor canals and more than 780 hydraulic structures of various kinds. It would enhance agricultural production by providing irrigation supplies to 170,000 acres.

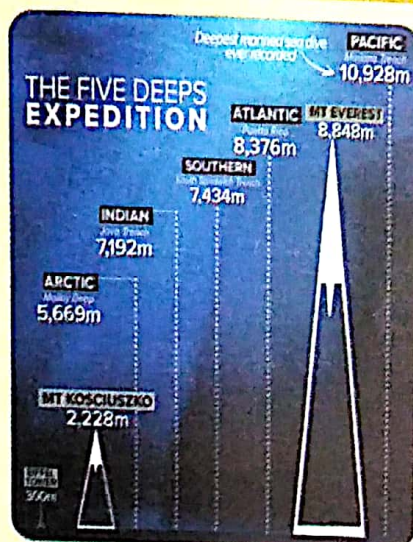
How did the Treaty of Versailles pave the way for World War II?

In the aftermath of World War I (1914–18), Germany was severely punished: One clause in the Treaty of Versailles even stipulated that Germany take responsibility for causing the war. In addition to its territorial losses, Germany was also made to pay for an Allied military force that would occupy the west bank of the Rhine River, intended to keep Germany in check for the next 15 years. The treaty also limited the size of Germany's military. In 1921, Germany received a bill for reparations: It owed the Allies \$33 million. While the postwar German government had been made to sign the Treaty of Versailles under the threat of more fighting from the Allies, the German people nevertheless faulted their leaders for accepting such strident terms. Not only was the German government weakened, but public resentment over the Treaty of Versailles soon developed into a strong nationalist movement—led by German chancellor and führer Adolf Hitler (1889–1945).

"Ring of Fire" Solar Eclipse

On December 26, Skywatchers from Saudi Arabia and Oman to Pakistan and Singapore were treated to a rare 'ring of fire' solar eclipse. This kind of solar eclipse is actually not a total eclipse but an annular one. This means the sun and the moon are positioned in a way to form a "ring of fire" as the moon does not completely cover the sun. Hence its edges will be illuminated. While these types of eclipses occur every year or two, they are only visible from a narrow band of Earth each time and it can be decades before the same pattern is repeated. As per Islamic traditions, special 'Kusoo' prayers were offered in various mosques across Pakistan in connection with the solar eclipse.

What are the deepest points in the oceans?



Lying deep below the **Pacific Ocean**, about 200 miles (322 kilometres) south of the island of Guam, is the Marianas Trench (also known as the Mariana Trench), which is 1,554 miles (2,550 kilometres) long and 44 miles (71 kilometres) wide. The deepest point of the Marianas Trench is 36,198 feet (11,033 metres). In the **Atlantic Ocean**, the Puerto Rico Trench is 28,374 feet (8,648 metres) below the surface. In the **Arctic Ocean**, the Eurasia Basin is 17,881 feet (5,450 metres) deep. The Java Trench in the **Indian Ocean** is 23,376 feet (7,125 metres) deep. Another deep point of note in the **Pacific Ocean** is Monterey Canyon off the coast of northern California. It is about 95 miles (153 kilometres) long and 11,800 feet (3,600 metres) deep. The cold waters generated in the trench create a perfect environment rich in foods that support a diverse range of wildlife. In comparison to all of these ocean canyons, the most famous land canyon—the Grand Canyon in Arizona—is 277 miles (446 kilometres) long and 6,000 feet (1,829 metres) deep. The world's ocean canyons are much more impressive, but most people will never see them.

What are the primary colours in light?

Colour is determined by the wavelength of visible light (the distance between one crest of the light wave and the next). Those colours that blend to form "white light" are, from shortest wave length to longest: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. All these monochromatic colours, except indigo, occupy large areas of the spectrum (the entire range of wavelengths produced when a beam of electromagnetic radiation is broken up). These colours can be seen when a light beam is refracted through a prism. Some consider the primary colours to be six monochromatic colours that occupy large areas of the spectrum: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and violet. Many physicists recognize three primary colours: red, yellow, and blue; or red, green, and blue. All other colours can be made from these by adding two primary colours in various proportions. Within the spectrum, scientists have discovered 55 distinct hues. Infrared and ultraviolet rays at each end of the spectrum are invisible to the human eye.

HANIF MOHAMMAD
(DECEMBER 21, 1934 - AUGUST 11, 2016)

The Little Master is regarded as one of the best batsmen of all time.

Who can forget his marathon 337 against the West Indies at Bridgetown in 1958!

Mohammad's knock—unleashed after Pakistan was forced to follow-on—lasted 970 minutes, making it the longest innings in Test cricket history.

condition that he not give it preference over the church-sanctioned Ptolemaic model. So, in 1632, Galileo published again: Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems, however, contained unconvincing objections to the Copernican view. The church saw through it and summoned the author to Rome to stand before the Inquisition (church interrogators).

Galileo was accused of violating the original edict of 1616, put on trial for heresy, and found guilty. Though he was ordered to recant, at some point he uttered the famous statement: "And yet it moves," a reference to the Copernican theory that Earth rotates on its axis.

Galileo was supposed to be imprisoned, but the pope commuted this sentence to house arrest at Galileo's home near Florence, where he died blind at the age of 78.

THE 5

THEMES OF GEOGRAPHY

Geography is the study of the physical features of the earth, including how humans affect the earth and are affected by it. Geography deals with physical aspects of the earth: the composition, the layers, the atmosphere, the plants and animals, mountains, rivers and other landforms. But it also analyzes how humans have affected those physical features and how the arrangement of those features has affected humans. Since geography is such a large subject, with so many topics, it makes sense to split it into key themes.

Magazine Desk

The five themes of geography that help answer these questions are: (1) Location; (2) Place; (3) Human-Environment Interaction; (4) Movement; and (5) Region. Here is a brief introduction to these themes.

Location

Location is defined as a particular place or position. Most studies of geography begin with the mention of this theme of geography. Location can be of two types: absolute location and relative location.

Absolute location: provides a definite reference to locate a place. The reference can be latitude and longitude, a street address, or even the Township and Range system. For example, you might be located at 183 Main Street in Anytown, USA, or you might be positioned at 42.2542°N, 77.7906°W.

Relative location: describes a place with respect to its environment and its connection to other places. As an example, a home might be located 1.3 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, 0.4 miles from the town's elementary school, and 32 miles from the nearest international airport.

Place

Place refers to the physical and human aspects of a location. This theme of geography is associated with toponym (the name of a place), site (the description of the features of the place), and situation (the environmental conditions of the place). Each place in the world has its unique characteristics.

Physical characteristics: include a description of such things as the mountains, rivers, beaches, topography, climate, and animal and plant life of a place. If a place is described as hot, sandy, fertile or forested, these terms all paint a picture of the physical characteristics of the location. A topographical map is one tool used to illustrate the physical characteristics of a location.

Human characteristics: include the human-designed cultural features of a place. These features include land use, architectural styles, forms of livelihood, religious practices, political systems, common foods, local folklore, means of

transportation and methods of communication. For example, a location could be described as a technologically advanced French-speaking democracy with a Catholic majority.

Human-Environment Interaction

This theme considers how humans adapt to and modify the environment. Humans shape the landscape through their interaction with the land; this has both positive and negative effects on the environment. As an example of the human-environment interaction, think about how people living in cold climates have often mined coal or drilled for natural gas in order to heat their homes. Another example would be the massive landfill projects in Boston conducted in the 18th and 19th centuries to expand habitable areas and improve transportation.

Movement

Humans move—a lot! In addition, ideas, goods, resources, and communication all travel distances. This theme studies movement and migration across the planet. The emigration of Syrians during war, the flow of water in the Gulf Stream, and the expansion of cell phone reception around the planet are all examples of movement.

Regions

Regions divide the world into manageable units for geographic study. Regions have some sort of characteristic that unifies the area. Regions can be formal, functional, or vernacular.

Formal regions are those that are designated by official boundaries, such as cities, states, provinces and countries. For the most part, they are clearly indicated and publicly known.

Functional regions are defined by their connections. For example, the circulation area for a major city area is the functional region of that paper.

Vernacular regions are perceived regions, such as "The South," "The Midwest," or the "Middle East"; they have no formal boundaries but are understood in our mental maps of the world. □

BOOK REVIEW

Pakistan at Seventy

Pakistan is over 72 now, an age at which most would have attained maturity and wisdom. Has Pakistan matured and become wise enough to accept and face up to the challenges that the modern, globalizing world presents to it is a question that may haunt the planners and policymakers of the country. The new government is thinking about it but many still question the direction in which it is headed. All of this, however, in no way implies that Pakistan has failed. It has had its share of failures but it has in no way failed.

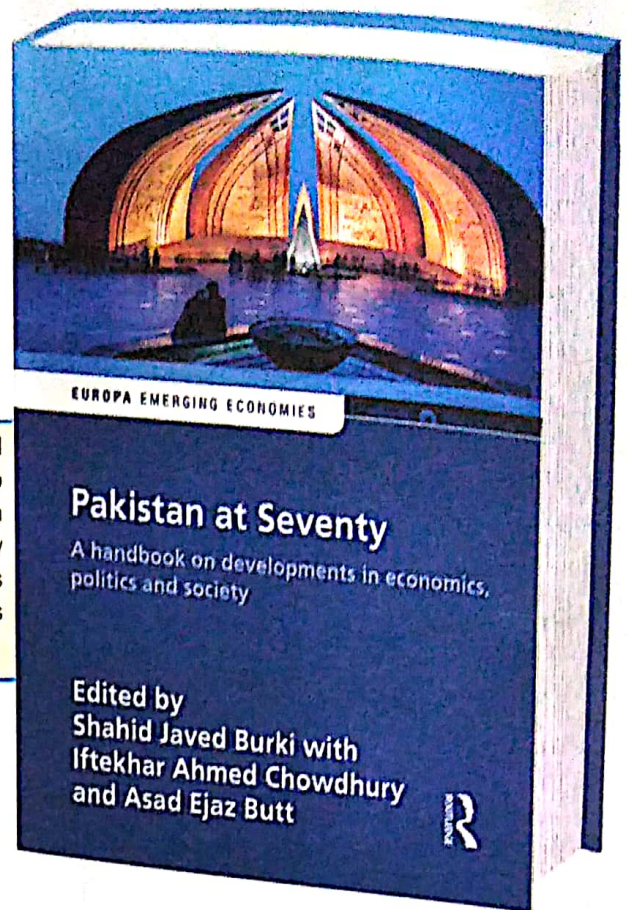
Reviewed by: Asad Ejaz Butt



Pakistan is a country that has attracted enormous amount of international interest and, in the process, it has had its share of controversies. And thus, no matter what perceptions about it may exist, for various reasons, it remains an important country. Firstly, it was created after an extended freedom struggle in South Asia and under very unusual social and political circumstances. Secondly, it was carved out of a country that also gained independence from the British colonial rule at the same time as Pakistan did which brought a totally unique set of regional characteristics to the South Asian region that comprises these two countries in presence of much smaller states like Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka. Thirdly, alongside Israel, it is arguably one of the only few countries found in the name of religion and, therefore, religion and the Islam narrative run deep through the country's philosophy.

Pak at Seventy: Handbook on Economics, Politics and Society

Some of this, alongside a comprehensive analysis on Pakistan's performance in the first 70 years of its existence has been captured in a newly-released book authored by eminent Pakistani scholar Shahid Javed Burki who has been assisted by former foreign Minister of Bangladesh Dr Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and myself. The book will sell with the title "Pakistan at Seventy: A handbook on development in economics, politics and society". This book is probably the only piece of literature that covers the entire breadth of the country's 70-year history while also doing dedicated chapters on nearly all important sectors of the economy including specific studies on water, energy, microfinance going as far ahead



as to include a full chapter on the evolution of media in the country. Each chapter is done by a renowned sector expert. This is in principle why this book becomes a great resource for CSS aspirants who would find it to be a hands-on preparatory tool with all requisite data and information on Pakistan under one title.

This book comes out at a strategic juncture in the history of Pakistan. The country is embarking on a mass-scale economic reform, transparency and accountability drive. On the foreign policy front, the country stands at the cusp of mending ties with the Americans while also forming a renewed economic alliance with China vis-à-vis China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

This article is meant to achieve the objective of bringing out an over-arching perspective from this book which is a mass consolidation of works done independently by authors from Pakistan, India and Bangladesh focusing upon the different sectors and areas of Pakistan's economics, politics and culture. While I try to echo the conclusions drawn by Shahid Javed Burki and Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury in their chapters, I would also want to confess that the case of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor—a raging subject in Pakistan—should have found more expression in the book.

Structure of the Book

The idea was not to structure the book thematically and,

BOOK REVIEW

therefore, the chapters though consolidated sequentially aren't divided into sections. But the coverage and scale of the work can be best examined by dividing the book into sections to see that the book has not only ventured into building a 70-year historic profile of Pakistan, an impression conveyed by the title of the book, but instead has engaged into analysis and discussions on both the contemporary and futuristic aspects of the economics, society and politics of Pakistan. The scope of the book was large indeed to engage into contemporary discussions around plans, policies and projects that are being currently run by the government and clearly, the 70-year focus of the book meant that a large part of it would be invested in discussions around Pakistan's development context, the history of its politics and economics, international relations with the neighbouring countries and the outside world, and institutions like media. If these subjects are taken to be separate sections of the book, one would conclude that the book is able to produce credible pieces of writing on each of the areas and has more to offer than a mere account of the country's history of a current stocktake of its economy.

Chapters

The challenges facing Pakistan are manifold. Not only are they numerous but also intense and manifested frequently. Recurrent flooding in the lower riparian states, droughts and desertification in the rural parts of Sindh and water contamination are some environmental challenges that are largely unaddressed in Pakistan.

There are no carbon-accounting mechanisms present in the country and the government has no capacity whatsoever to keep a count of its footprint on the environment. Climate change, thus, is an area of inquiry that is still at a premature stage in Pakistan. The Ministry of Climate Change has been set up at the centre but its capacity and functionality are both limited. This, of course, is strongly correlated with both water and food shortages, both of which have strong economic and health repercussions. Some of these contemporary challenges, especially those pertaining to misuse and the resulting lack of natural resources are well covered in the book. Mahmood Ahmad, Kulsum Ahmad and Ziad Allahdad have discussed in detail Pakistan's energy and water deficits.

The chapters by Aziz Ahmed Khan, Khurshid Kasuri, Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and Subrata Kumar Mitra focus upon Pakistan's foreign policy and strained relations with India while those by Riaz Hassan, Jahangir

Karamat, Shirin-Tahir Kheli and Shahid Najam take a more internal perspective on the politics of Pakistan by analyzing the contours of the changing civil-military relations and how power balances and the political landscape have evolved.

The leading economists of Pakistan Ishrat Husain, Farrukh Iqbal and Masood Ahmad have provided insights on the development and macroeconomic challenges and prospects facing Pakistan. In addition, Parvez Hasan and myself have provided timelines and histories of the development planning and discourse in the country.

The critical role that democratic, progressive and stable institutions like media can play in the growth of Pakistan is an area that has been explored by a few authors including Shahid Kardar, Ayub Ghauri, Saleem Ahmed Ranjha and Khaled Ahmed.

Conclusion

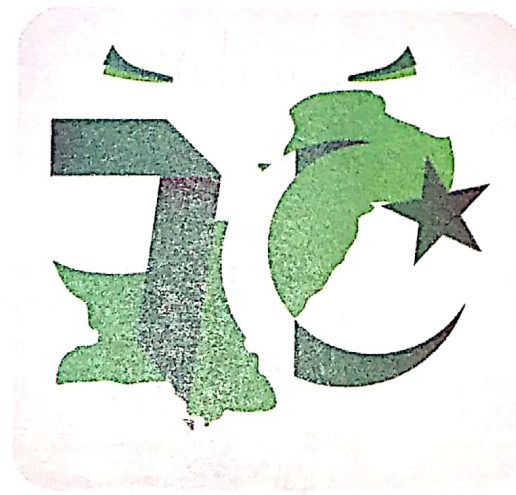
Shahid Javed Burki, the principal author of the book, has contributed four chapters. The common notion that he's stressed upon in all these chapters is the unrealized potential of Pakistan and the underutilization of the country's four sustainable assets including women who he regards to be extremely productive and passionate about their professional and work pursuits, the youth bulge which is expanding at a rapid pace and at a time when the developed global north is facing an ageing crisis, a large population that comprises the youth but also other age groups and lastly, the vast agriculture base that can be used to

bolster Pakistan's economic growth and also to cater for its increasing water and food security needs.

This is a unique perspective that is supported by an emphasis on the fact that the world is rapidly changing and technological advancements will be key to economic development in future and hence it is imperative that the potential of the four sustainable assets be harnessed by leveraging technology as a tool to create meaningful employment opportunities for the youth, women and other strata of the society.

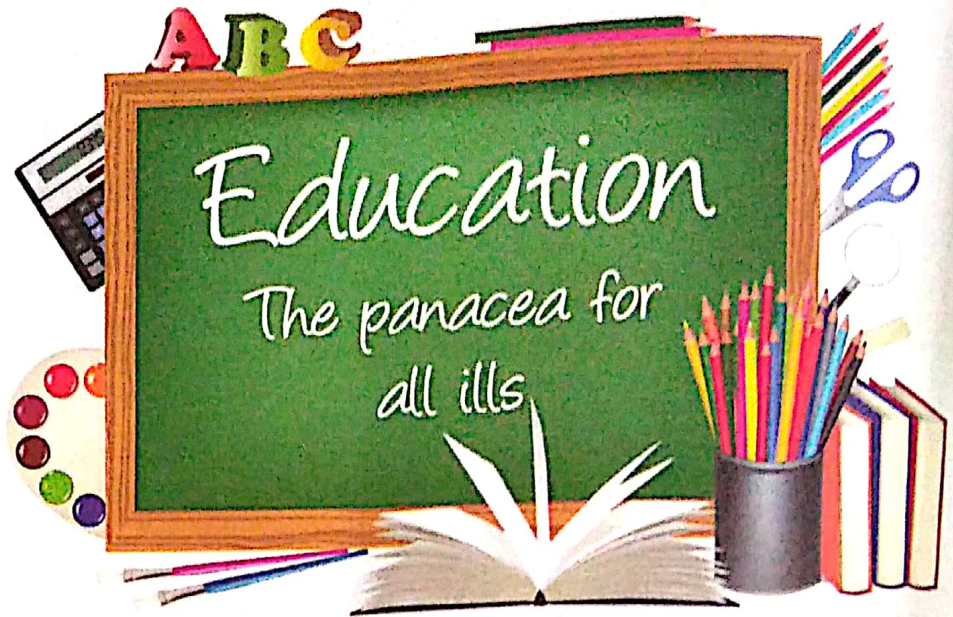
The book is to be launched to the Pakistani audience on the 28th January 2020, at the World Bank office in Islamabad following which it shall be available with the local book retailers across the country. ■

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GENERAL

Education is an integral part of our life. It leads us to the prosperous and enchanted world and to the right path. The great Nelson Mandela said, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." It holds true for Pakistan as well. Education can solve all the problems of Pakistan.



Muhammad Arham Shahid

The education system in Pakistan is in the throes of severe crisis. Numerous problems have resulted from the weakness in the education system in Pakistan, which have jeopardized the fate of the nation.

At present, the biggest problem that is aggravating many issues in our society is unbridled growth in population. Population is rising copiously day by day and birth rate is far greater than the death rate.

Why increasing population is a glaring problem in our society?

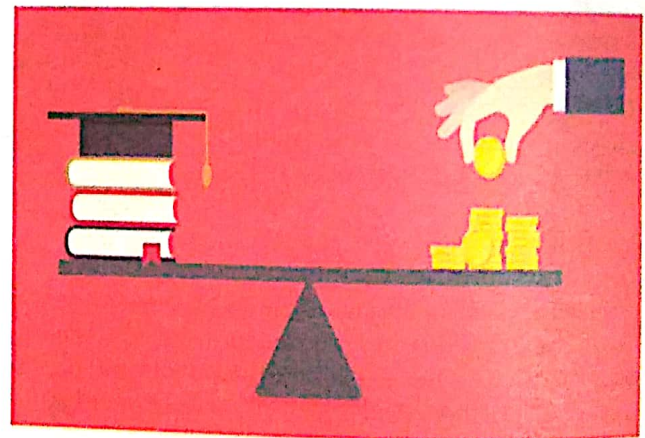
The answer may seem strange to some but it is true that lack of education is provoking early marriages, ergo more births. In most of the families, it has become a norm to prefer a son over a daughter. However, Islam doesn't allow this difference. With a strong desire to have a son, parents are having more children and it, in turn, adds to the growing population. Moreover, in rural areas, fathers want their sons to help them at their work; on farms and caring animals. This practice leaves hundreds of thousands of youngsters without education.

Early marriages increase the span of reproductive health. In villages, most people marry their girls between the ages of 16 and 19 years. Their youthful days are wasted in doing household chores and giving birth to children.

We also see people scuffling on roads during traffic jams or on minor issues like touching of a vehicle to another one. This is due to "impatience". Everyone wants to reach their destination before others. In these traffic jams—which last many hours—accidents and severe skirmishes are frequently seen.

On international level, Pakistan is considered a poor and underdeveloped country. It is lagging behind other nations only due to lack of education. We have read in history

books that when our rulers, like Mughals, were busy in pleasure-seeking and building mightiest of forts, the British were building research institutes and universities. Another significant factor plaguing the education sector is radicalisation on campuses, which discourages critical thinking and also causes poor quality of teachers and the



unavailability of jobs for students in universities. All of these are interlinked and once again point towards low funding, which gives birth to these problems.

Weakness in the education system creates social polarization and frustration among the nation; snatching away the wisdom of thinking. On the other hand, democracy ensures the atmosphere for national integration; elevating the national dignity. When quality education is not in access to everyone in a society, a trust deficit arises among people, which weakens their ability to work cooperatively. A lack of opportunities further provokes resentment. This brings instability in a country, which weakens democracy and curbs human rights of which education is one. ■

Dec '19 - Jan '20

WORLD IN FOCUS



M. Usman Butt

NATIONAL

Dec 16: The Supreme Court of Pakistan held that Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa would stand retired after six months unless parliament allowed him extension of tenure by amending the relevant army laws.

Dec 16: A European group the 'EU DisinfoLab' uncovered a network of obscure NGOs and think tanks that assist over 200 'fake' news outlets managed by an Indian network to influence the European Union and the United Nations with content critical of Pakistan.

Dec 16: King of Bahrain Hamad bin Isa al Khalifa conferred upon Prime Minister Imran Khan the Gulf state's highest civil award 'The King Hamad Order of the Renaissance'.

Dec 16: Dr Muhammad Khawar Jameel took oath as Federal Insurance Ombudsman.

Dec 16: The annual Jhal Magsi desert rally concluded with Nauman Saranjam clinching the first position.

Dec 16: Malaysian car manufacturer Proton delivered X70 to Pakistan government as per promise made by Malaysian Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad to Prime Minister Imran Khan during his visit to Pakistan in March last year.

Dec 17: The three-member bench of the special court—headed by Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Waqar Ahmad Seth and comprising Justice Nazar Akbar of the Sindh High Court (SHC) and Justice Shahid Karim of the Lahore High

The Kuala Lumpur Summit 2019

On Dec 21, the Kuala Lumpur summit, to be known as the Perdana Dialogue from next year, ended. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad presided over the meeting with fellow heads of state, President Hassan Rouhani of Iran and President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani also attended the event. Pakistan chose to not attend that summit.

On Pakistan's absence

The refusal of Pakistan to attend the fifth Kuala Lumpur Summit (KLS) after confirming their attendance is being witnessed as a great diplomacy failure on the part of Pakistan and the team of Prime Minister Imran Khan. Despite the chain of problems within the Muslim world, Pakistan was well aware of the dynamics of the situation, which should have been factored in while trying to bridge the gap between Saudi Arabia and Malaysia. The position Pakistan has adopted takes away its autonomy and brings it right back to following the same foreign policy as that during the cold war—one of complete dictation by those who hold leverage over countries in need of assistance.

In this particular case as well, despite both Malaysia and Pakistan reaffirming that the KLS is not an alternative to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), the Saudis strictly warned Pakistan against participation and holding off the aid that is being offered. This puts Pakistan in a weak position—one that the country cannot diplomatically afford. Moving forward into the new era, Pakistan needs to have a foreign policy independent of foreign demands because the current situation ended up upsetting not just Malaysia and Turkey as well and taking away Pakistan's right to form ties according to its own needs and wants.

This particular debacle only points towards the lack of preparation and understanding on the part of diplomatic efforts made by Pakistan. The Summit

was being launched in Kuala Lumpur officially under Mahathir Mohamad this year. Pakistan's participation would have granted the Summit the support that it needs to function alongside OIC as an independent body working for the cause of the Muslim World. Withdrawing from it not only puts weight behind the claims of the Saudi government but also does not achieve anything substantial when it comes to overcoming the challenges between Saudi Arabia and Malaysia.

If Pakistan can now get the two parties on the discussion table, things can move forward in a manner that will be likely to benefit all parties involved. For this, there is a need to strategise efficiently when it comes to diplomatic ventures. This will ensure that Pakistan does not have to backtrack on its own promises and the goals set for our own selves in terms of diplomacy.



EXAM PACK

Court (LHC)—found former military ruler Gen (R) Pervez Musharraf guilty of high treason and handed him a death sentence under Article 6 of the Constitution.

Dec 17: Pakistan was ranked the third worst country in global rankings for gender equality in Global Gender Gap Report 2020. Pakistan was just ahead of Iraq and Yemen, a ranking of 151 out of 153 countries.

Dec 17: The government announced that it would not attend the Kuala Lumpur Summit at any level.

Dec 17: Air Marshal Zafar Chaudhry, the 8th chief of the Pakistan Air Force, passed away. He served from March 3, 1972 to April 15, 1974.

Dec 17: Prime Minister Imran Khan addressed the Global Refugee Forum. He warned delegates that one of the biggest refugee crises is about to take place because of recent actions by the Indian government. He said India's revocation of Kashmir's special status on Aug. 5 aims to change the demographics of the region from a Muslim-majority to a Muslim-minority state, which is likely to provoke a refugee crisis that will dwarf previous ones.

Dec 17: Nida Dar of Pakistan was named in ICC Women's T20I squad for her outstanding performance in ICC events.

Dec 19: Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced the appointment of Ms Aisha Farooqui as the new Spokesperson of Foreign Office.

Dec 19: The Executive Board of the IMF completed the first review of Pakistan's economic performance and approved \$452 million second tranche under the Extended Fund Facility.

Dec 19: Planning and Development Board, Punjab, and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) signed Technical Cooperation Agreement 2020.

Dec 20: Veteran British-Pakistani politician and first Muslim elected as councillor in the United Kingdom, Bashir Maan passed away at the age of 93.

Dec 20: The Trump administration approved the resumption of military training facilities for Pakistan to "improve bilateral cooperation on shared priorities".

Dec 20: The president reconstituted the Council of Common Interests by inducting Planning and Development Minister

Corruption in Pakistan

Corruption in Pakistan maintained its strong grip, as the country fared poorly in the newly-released Transparency International global report on the 2019 Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Pakistan managed to score only 32 points and was ranked at the 120th spot among 180 countries, sitting alongside Niger and Moldova on the index. Pakistan witnessed a drop in ranking by three places (117th in 2018) and also scored a point lower, as compared to 33 points scored in 2018.

The top countries are New Zealand and Denmark, with scores of 87 each, followed by Finland (86), Singapore (85), Sweden (85) and Switzerland (85).

The bottom countries are Somalia, South Sudan and Syria with scores of 9, 12 and 13, respectively. These countries are closely followed by Yemen (15), Venezuela (16), Sudan (16), Equatorial Guinea (16) and Afghanistan (16).



Asad Umar and Power Minister Omar Ayub as its members.

Dec 21: Opening batsman Abid Ali became the first Pakistani to score centuries in each of his first two Tests.

Dec 21: Justice Gulzar Ahmed was sworn in to serve as the 27th Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP).

Dec 22: British Pakistani boxer Hasnan Ali won the title of England & Wales Champion.

Dec 22: Renowned writer and poet Amjad Islam Amjad received Turkey's prestigious Necip Fazil International Culture and Art Award.

Dec 23: Pakistan's first home Test series in 10 years—against Sri Lanka—concluded with the hosts standing victorious 1-0.

Dec 24: Dr Moeed Yusuf was appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning.

Dec 24: SAPM on Information and Broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan announced 8th Wage board award for journalists.

Dec 24: Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) appointed Farrukh Hussain Khan its CEO.

Dec 24: The federal cabinet gave approval to the removal of 820,165 beneficiaries from the BISP database, describing them as "undeserving". The data revealed that out of those removed from the programme, more than 140,000 were those who or their spouses were government employees.

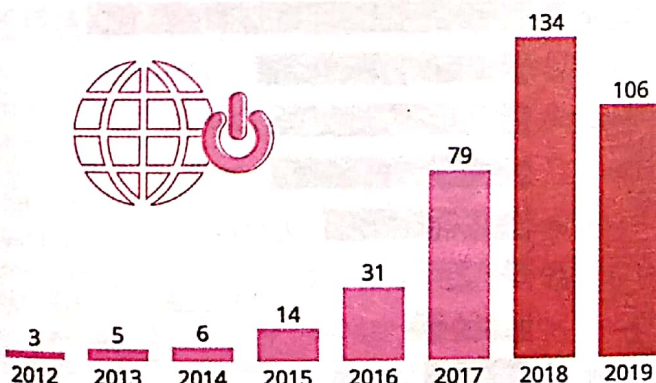
Dec 25: The first street library in Pakistan, with over 600 books on different subjects, was inaugurated in Karachi.

Dec 26: Islamabad High Court (IHC) dismissed the petition filed against Ibrarul Haq's appointment to the post of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society's (PRCS) chairman.

Dec 26: Former Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani, was awarded the 2020 J. Clifford Wallace Award by the J. Reuben Clark Law Society in recognition of his

The Rise of the Internet Kill Switch in India

Number of recorded internet shutdowns in India 2012-2019



EXAM PACK

The New Chief Election Commissioner

Another thaw has taken place in the working relationship between the opposition and the treasury in the shape of key appointments in the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). Sikandar Sultan Raja has won the confidence of both sides to be appointed the new chief election commissioner (CEC), while Nisar Durrani and Shah Mohammad Jatui will be ECP members from Sindh and Balochistan. Announcing the names, Federal Minister for Human Rights Shireen Mazari said the parliamentary committee worked with a great responsibility to pick the names and that parliamentary matters needed to be decided by the parliament. The name of Raja, a retired bureaucrat and man of impeccable integrity, was floated by Prime Minister Imran Khan. The other two nominees were Jamil Ahmad and Fazal Abbas Maken. Opposition Leader in the National Assembly Shahbaz Sharif proposed former attorney general Irfan Qadir, Nasir Mehmood Khosa, brother of former Chief Justice of Pakistan Asif Saeed Khosa, and Akhlaq Ahmed Tarar, a former federal secretary, for the top poll body slot. The process should have been completed in September but it is always better late than never.

Both the opposition and the treasury never showed keenness on early nomination against the constitutional posts. It is the duty of both sides to fill vacant slots under Article 213 (2-A) of the Constitution. But in those days, both sides had strained ties, mainly due to the hounding of



opposition leaders by the government. Gradually, things improved when the government allowed jailed PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif to leave Pakistan for treatment. Then the opposition supported the government in the passage of the army act. Now, a new normal exists where the government is totally focused on resolving a flurry of crises, such as a forward bloc in Punjab, the shortage of flour and price hike in sugar. It is hoped that in future such appointments, where both sides have to sit together and forge an agreement on nomination, will not be delayed. Also that both sides will show political maturity to resolve such issues, instead of creating unnecessary deadlocks. In case parliament fails to play its role, the space is encroached upon by other institutions. As was the case, Senator Sirajul Haq floated a bill proposing a way forward in case of deadlock over appointment of the CEC and ECP members. The bill proposes that the matter should be decided by a judicial body, consisting of judges. Yet it is a considered opinion that parliamentarians should learn to resolve issues within itself.

extraordinary career as a judge and a jurist.

Dec 26: Stage, film and TV actor Ashraf Razi died. He was 66.

Dec 27: The government made drastic changes in the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999 through a presidential ordinance.

Dec 27: The Pakistan Aeronautical Complex (PAC) Kamra rolled out its first batch of eight dual-seat JF-17 aircraft.

Dec 28: Google honoured acclaimed singer Iqbal Bano with her Doodle on what would have been her 81st birthday.

Dec 30: PM Imran Khan launched the Sehat Insaf Card facility for the transgender community, the first in the country's history, to provide succour to the most vulnerable segment of society.

Dec 31: Lahore High Court Chief Justice Sardar Muhammad Shamim Khan retired after he reached superannuation.

Dec 31: Justice Mamoon Rashid Sheikh became Lahore High Court (LHC) chief justice.

Dec 31: UBL became the only bank to win the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) "Top Companies of the Year" Award for three consecutive years (2016-18).

Dec 31: The federal cabinet approved Shahid Salim Khan as regular Managing Director of OGDCL for three-year tenure.

Dec 31: Senior professionals from the broadcast media formed a 16-member executive committee to run the affairs of the newly-established Association of Electronic Media Editors and News Directors (AEMEND).

Jan 01: The federal government transferred Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police chief Dr Mohammad Naeem Khan and replaced him with Sanaullah Abbasi.

Jan 01: Phase two of the much-touted China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement came into effect. The new phase will allow Pakistani manufacturers and traders to export around 313 new products to the Chinese market with zero duties.

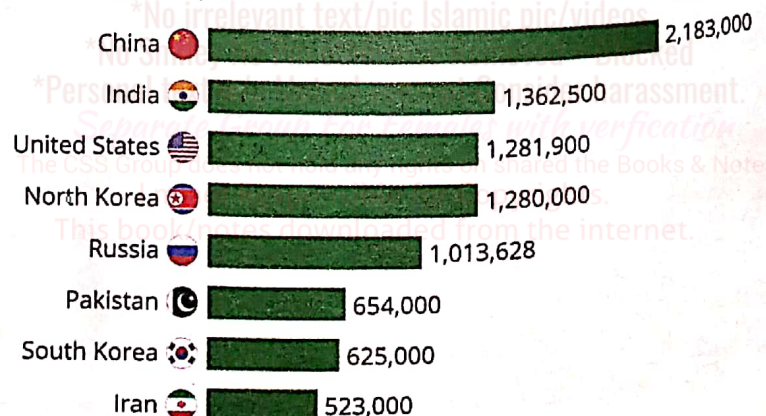
Jan 02: Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammad bin Zayed announced an allocation of \$200 million to support SMEs in Pakistan.

Jan 03: At the conclusion of the 23rd Pak-Iran Joint Border Commission meeting in Quetta, both countries signed an agreement to jointly resolve border issues, including terrorism, unlawful trade, drugs smuggling, illegal border crossing and human trafficking.

Jan 04: Renowned Pakistani mountaineer from Skardu, Mohammad Ali Sadpara, along

The Largest Militaries in the World

Countries with the largest total available active military manpower in 2019



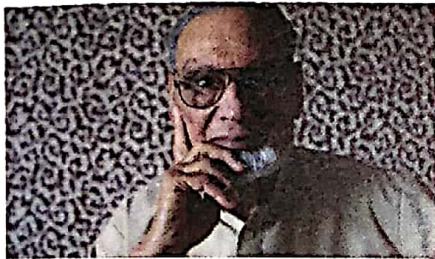
EXAM PACK

with French climber Marc Batard, scaled Mont Blanc, the highest peak in the Alps—considered deadliest in the world.

Jan 05: Syed Safwanullah, a former federal minister, leader of the MQM and intellectual, passed away.

Jan 05: KP's health minister Dr Hisham Inamullah Khan was replaced by Shahram Tarkai.

Jan 06: Russia finally provided Pakistan a sanction-free structure for the strategic North-South Gas Pipeline. The construction work is likely to start somewhere in June-July this year with an estimated cost of over \$2 billion.



Jan 06: In order to combat the menace of drugs and child abuse and to create awareness among parents and teachers about how to protect children from the menace, Prime Minister Imran Khan launched a mobile application called "Zindagi" (life) which can be used for lodging complaints against drug abuse.

Jan 06: The sixth bilateral "Exercise Sea Guardians 2020" between Pakistan Navy and China's People's Liberation Army (Navy) started.

Jan 06: Pakistan's promising youngster Mohammad Hamza Khan outclassed Yusuf Sheikh of England to win the U-15 title at the British Junior Open Squash Championship.

Jan 07: Atif Bajwa was appointed the President of Bank of Punjab. Mr Bajwa has previously been associated with Bank Alfalah, MCB Bank and Soneri Bank as well as RBS and CitiBank.

Jan 07: Sibtain Khan, the PTI MPA from Mianwali, took oath as minister in the cabinet of Punjab Chief Minister Usman Buzdar for second time.

Jan 07: The National Assembly passed the bills meant to empower the prime minister to give extension to the three services chiefs.

Jan 07: Justice (r) Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim, who served as Chief Election Commissioner, Sindh governor, law

Hottest, Fastest, Priciest: 10 Records in 2019

Record temperatures: Temperatures in July 2019 were the hottest-ever recorded globally at an average of 16.75 degrees Celsius (more than 62 Fahrenheit) for the planet. A heatwave in Europe the same month reset several record highs: 42.6 degrees for Paris; 41.5 degrees for Germany; and 38.7 degrees in Britain. In December, it was Australia's turn to set a record for its hottest day ever, with an average national maximum temperature of 41.9 degrees Celsius (107.4 Fahrenheit) on December 19, while a scorching heatwave intensified bushfires.

Facebook fine: Facebook was in July slapped with the largest-ever fine—\$5 billion—imposed on any company for violating consumers' privacy. Announcing the penalty, the Federal Trade Commission said it was also one of the largest ever issued by the US government for any violation.

Monster sale: Chinese consumers spent a record \$38.3 billion on Alibaba platforms in the annual 24-hour "Singles' Day" buying spree in November. It was a jump of 26 percent from the previous record high a year earlier.

Art auction highs: Banksy's "Devolved Parliament" painting depicting lawmakers as chimps was sold at auction in October for 11.1 million euros, a record for the British artist. A new auction record for a work by a living artist was set in May when Jeff Koons' stainless steel "Rabbit" fetched \$91.1 million.

Under two hours: Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge became the first man to run a marathon distance in under two hours in October when he set a time of 1hr 59min 40.2sec at an unofficial event in Vienna.

Most medals: US gymnastics star Simone Biles scooped five gold medals in October to take her World Championship medal haul to a record 25, topping the 23 won by men's star Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus in the 1990s.

Summit speedster: Nepali mountaineer Nirmal Purj summited all of the world's 14 highest peaks in just six months and six days over April to October, smashing the previous record for the feat of almost eight years.



minister, attorney general and a Supreme Court judge, died. He was 91.

Jan 07: The well-known business magazine Forbes declared Pakistan among the top 10 "under-the-radar" travel destinations for 2020.

Jan 08: Former international weightlifting champion Mohammad Javed Butt breathed his last. He was 82.

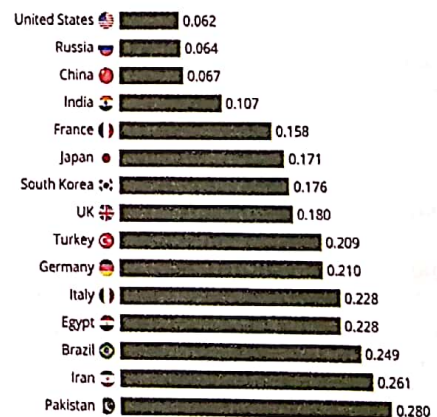
Jan 08: Dr Fouzia Saeed was appointed director general of Pakistan National Council of Arts.

Jan 08: Two new ministers—Iqbal Wazir and Malik Shah Mohammad—were inducted into provincial cabinet of KP.

Jan 08: The federal government appointed Akbar Hussain Durrani the federal secretary for Information and Broadcasting in place of Zahida Parveen.

The World's Most Powerful Militaries

Countries ranked highest on the Global Firepower PowerIndex (0.000=perfect/most powerful)



Jan 09: President Dr Arif Alvi conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Nadeem Raza for his illustrious services for defence of the country.

Jan 09: Prime Minister Imran Khan ordered the overhaul of the country's public diplomacy and information policy for effective projection of national narrative abroad by improving the skill set and orientation of ambassadors and their subordinate diplomatic and media staff at all the missions abroad.

Jan 09: Pakistan asked a US federal court to pause Tethyan Copper Co. Pty Ltd's bid to enforce a \$6 billion arbitral award while it looks to have the award nixed.

Jan 09: PM Imran Khan inaugurated Pakistan's largest skills development

programme 'Hunarmand Jawan'.

Jan 09: President Arif Alvi signed three bills; the Pakistan Army (Amendment) Act, 2020, the Pakistan Air Force (Amendment) Act, 2020 and the Pakistan Navy (Amendment) Act, 2020 into law.

Jan 09: The KP government and the National Disaster Risk Management Fund (NDRMF) signed an agreement for extending a grant of up to Rs429.695 million to strengthen and expand emergency rescue services in 17 districts of the province through Rescue 1122.

Jan 09: Apart from declaring forced conversions as un-Islamic and unconstitutional, the Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) announced that several sections of the National Accountability Ordinance, 1999, were against the norms of Shariah and even described them as below human dignity.

Jan 09: The European Union (EU) refused to take part in a rare diplomatic visit to India-Occupied Kashmir because they would not be allowed to meet detained local politicians.

Jan 10: Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund won the prestigious Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks Award for the fourth consecutive year.

Jan 10: The National Assembly passed Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Bill, 2019, which envisages establishment of Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA) where child missing case will be reported and it will generate an automatic alert.

Jan 10: Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated the newly constructed Azakhel dry port, completed at a cost of Rs510 million, in KP's Nowshera district.

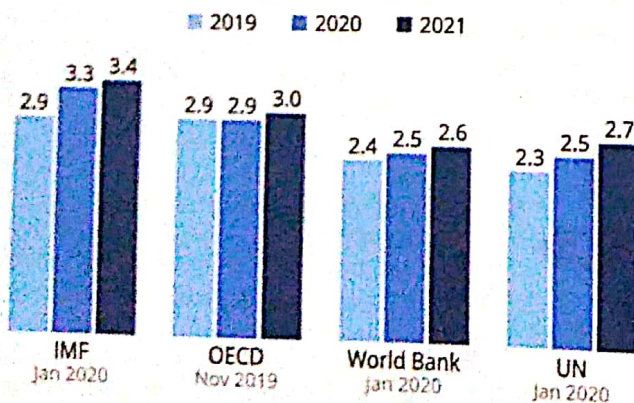
Jan 10: The country's 10 banks signed an agreement to establish Pakistan Corporate Restructuring Company Ltd.

Jan 10: The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) announced to extend its One-Stop-Shop (OSS) facility for company registration in Balochistan and KP.

Jan 12: Balochistan's Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) declared emergency in Mastung, Qila Abdullah, Kech, Ziarat, Harnai, and Pishin districts after a spell of heavy rain and snowfall across the province.

Where Is the World Economy Headed?

Global GDP growth forecasts by major international organizations (in %)



Highest-paid Creator on YouTube

Ryan Kaji, an eight-year-old boy who reviews toys, has been named as the highest-earning YouTuber, for the second year in a row. Ryan, of Ryan's World, earned \$26m (£20m) in 2019, up from \$22m in 2018, according to an annual top-10 ranking by Forbes, based on estimated earnings between June 2018 and June 2019.

Ryan, who lives with his mother, father and twin sisters in Texas, usually releases a new video for his 22.9 million subscribers each day. They frequently receive millions of hits, and a couple have more than a billion. Ryan's most popular video, which has 1.9 billion views, is a five-minute 56 second clip of him running around on an inflatable in his garden, retrieving plastic eggs with toys inside. The youngster, whose estimated earnings doubled from 2017 to 2018, has rebranded his account from Ryan ToysReview to Ryan's World since last year's ranking.

Best paid YouTube stars

1	=		Ryan Kaji	\$26,000,000
2	↑1		Dude Perfect	\$20,000,000
3	NEW		Nasty	\$18,000,000
4	NEW		Preston and Link	\$17,500,000
5	=		Jeffree Star	\$17,000,000
6	NEW		Preston Arsenment	\$14,000,000
7	↑2		PewDiePie	\$13,000,000
7	↓1		Markiplier	\$13,000,000
9	↓5		Daniel Middleton	\$12,000,000
10	↓3		Evan Fong	\$11,500,000

Jan 12: MQM-Pakistan convener Dr Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui resigned as federal minister for information technology.

Jan 13: The Lahore High Court (LHC) declared unconstitutional all actions taken by the previous government against former military ruler Pervez Musharraf, including the filing of a complaint on high treason charge and the formation of a special court as well as its proceedings, leading to the abolition of the death penalty handed down to him by the trial court on Dec 17.

Jan 13: The principal of the Police Training School in Rawat, SP Abrar Hussain Nekokara, killed himself in his office.

Jan 13: The Ministry of National Health Services (NHS) appointed Dr Asad Hafeez the first vice chancellor (VC) of the Health Services Academy (HSA).

Jan 13: Army thrashed Karachi United to clinch the 12th National Women's Football Championship title.

Jan 14: The 6th Exercise Sea Guardians 2020 between Pakistan Navy and China's Navy ended.

Jan 14: Promising Ahsan Ramzan outclassed top seed Umer Khan to clinch the Jubilee Insurance National U-18 Snooker Championship title.

Jan 15: The National Assembly passed a bill allowing establishment of University of Islamabad.

Jan 15: KP Chief Minister Mahmood Khan launched e-ticketing and payment system for depositing traffic fines and driving licence fee in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Jan 15: Pakistan batsman Babar Azam was named in the ICC ODI Team of the Year for the second time in his career.

Jan 15: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) held a meeting on Jammu and Kashmir and reviewed the situation in the India-occupied valley.

INTERNATIONAL

Dec 16: Chinese President Xi Jinping reposed trust in Hong Kong's beleaguered leader Carrie Lam and told her that she had Beijing's "unwavering support".

Dec 16: Jean-Paul Delevoye, the French government official whose controversial pension reform plans have triggered nationwide strikes, resigned.

Dec 17: The Geneva-based World Economic Forum released its Global Gender Gap Report 2020 according to which women may have to wait 257 years for equality at work.

Dec 17: The two-day Global Refugee Forum started in Geneva with a call for a more equitable response to refugee crisis.

Dec 17: South Korean President Moon Jae-in appointed Chung Sye-kyun—a six-term lawmaker and former commerce minister—his country's prime minister.

Dec 17: Australia's Ellyse Perry bagged the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year and was also named the Women's ODI Player of the Year. She also bagged the T20I Player of the Year trophy for the second year running.

Dec 18: Jewher Ilham, the daughter of jailed Uighur intellectual Ilham Tohti, received European Parliament's Sakharov Prize awarded to her father.

Dec 18: Europe's CHEOPS planet-hunting space telescope left Earth and moved into orbit. The telescope will measure the density, composition and size of planets beyond our Solar System—known as exoplanets.

Dec 19: Belgium were crowned FIFA's Team of the Year for the second straight time.

Dec 20: Beijing loyalist Ho Iat Seng was inaugurated as China's chief executive in Macau.

Dec 21: Mexico's Julio Cesar Martinez won the World Boxing Council flyweight title.

Dec 21: France's competition watchdog fined Google €150 million (\$167m) for abusing its power over the treatment of advertisers.

Dec 21: Turkey's parliament approved a security and military deal with Libya's UN-supported government.

The State of Democracy

Global Democracy Index rates, by country/territory (2019)*

Full democracies

- 9.00-10.00
- 8.00-8.99

Flawed democracies

- 7.00-7.99
- 6.00-6.99

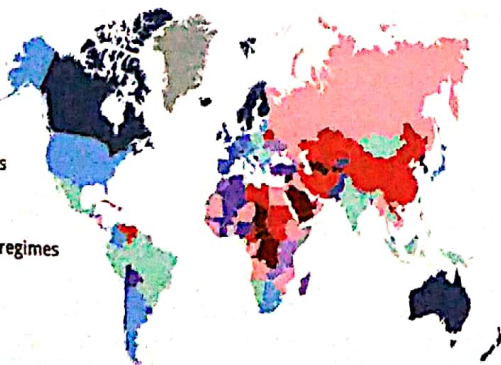
Hybrid regimes

- 5.00-5.99
- 4.00-4.99

Authoritarian regimes

- 3.00-3.99
- 2.00-2.99
- 0-1.99

● No data



Dec 21: The US created a full-fledged US Space Force within the Department of Defence, with an aim to meet a mounting 21st-century strategic challenge from Russia and China.

Dec 22: Preliminary results of Sept. 28 presidential election in Afghanistan were released according to which the incumbent President Ashraf Ghani won a slim majority of votes.

Dec 23: A secondary circuit for Iran's Arak heavy water reactor became operational as part of its redesign under the 2015 nuclear deal, the country's atomic energy chief Ali Akbar Salehi announced.

Dec 23: Russian President Vladimir Putin opened a railway bridge that links annexed Crimea to southern Russia.

Dec 23: Algeria's powerful military chief Gen. Ahmed Gaid Salah, died at age 79.

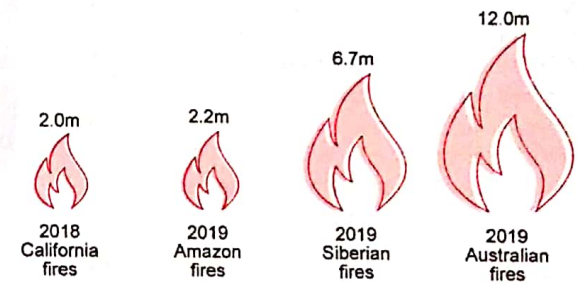
Dec 24: Travis Kalanick, a co-founder of Uber, announced his exit from the company's board of directors.

Dec 26: Turkey's Constitutional Court ruled that a more than two-year block on access to online encyclopaedia Wikipedia in the country was a violation of freedom of expression.

Dec 27: Russia put its first Avangard hypersonic missiles

The Size of the Australian Wildfires in Comparison

Acres burned in recent major wildfire events



into service, becoming the first country to put into combat service intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with hypersonic weapons that can travel 20 times faster than the speed of sound.

Dec 27: China launched Long March 5 rocket, one of the world's most powerful rockets, carrying a Shijian 20 test satellite payload in a major step forward for its planned mission to Mars in 2020.

Dec 27: Iran, China and Russia began joint naval drills in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Oman.

Dec 28: The UN General Assembly adopted a \$3.07 billion operating budget which, for the first time, includes funding for the investigation of war crimes in Syria and Myanmar.

Dec 30: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's handpicked Army Chief Gen. Bipin Rawat was appointed India's first Chief of Defence Staff (CDS).

Dec 31: Germany shut down Philippsburg Nuclear Power Plant, one of its seven remaining nuclear power plants, as part of a planned phase-out of atomic energy production by the end of 2022.

Dec 31: Britain's Prince William launched a multi-million pound prize to encourage the world's greatest problem-

solvers to find answers to Earth's environmental problems.

Jan 01: Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan was named the Arab world's most influential leader of 2019.

Jan 01: North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un declared an end to moratoriums on nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests and threatened a demonstration of a "new strategic weapon" soon.

Jan 02: Former US Secretary of State and presidential candidate Hillary Clinton was appointed the new chancellor

Bahrain.

Jan 03: A US drone strike in Baghdad killed Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, a top Iranian commander who headed Al-Quds Force, foreign operations arm of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps.

Jan 04: China appointed Luo Huining the director of its liaison office, which represents the central government in semi-autonomous Hong Kong, in place of Wang Zhimin.

Jan 05: Iraq's parliament called on US and other foreign troops to leave amid a growing backlash against the US killing

The Royal Split Explained

Prince Harry and his wife Meghan Markle, the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, will stop using their royal titles, give up state funding and repay taxpayer money used to refurbish their home at Windsor Castle as they seek to pursue new careers outside of Britain's royal family. The couple has agreed to give up their royal status as part of a deal they have struck with the Queen. The seismic transition, perceived as an abdication in all but name, will take place from the spring. The deal is intended to end a crisis that erupted when the couple abruptly announced plans to step back from their royal duties and spend part of each year in North America. They will also repay the £2.4 million in public money used to refurbish Frogmore Cottage, the house in grounds of the Queen's Windsor Castle they moved into last year. The new arrangement will be reviewed after a year by the senior royals.

What does it mean for their titles?

Harry will remain a prince and sixth in line of succession. But the couple will no longer be working members of Britain's monarchy, no longer use their "Royal Highness" titles and will now be free to seek a private income. Harry will also relinquish his honorary military appointments and his status as a Commonwealth Youth Ambassador. But the couple will preserve their links to a network of private charities.

Who will pay?

Harry and Meghan will no longer receive income from the monarchy's funding, known as the "Sovereign Grant". This is a government handout that covers the running costs of the royal household and travel expenses. The couple previously said the grant was equivalent to 5% of their income towards running their official office. The remaining income came from Prince Charles's centuries-old private estate. Charles, heir to the throne and father of Prince Harry and Prince William, will continue to offer private financial support.



How will they earn money?

Some of Queen Elizabeth's other grandchildren work, including Prince Andrew's daughters Beatrice and Eugenie, who work in business and the arts. Last year, Harry said he would be teaming up with US television mogul Oprah Winfrey to produce a documentary on mental health for Apple's video streaming service. A video footage was recently published showing the couple at the premiere of Disney's Lion King in London last year. It shows Harry telling the film's director that Meghan, a former actress, is available for voiceover work, with Meghan saying: "That's really why we're here – it's the pitch."

Six months ago Harry and Meghan applied to the UK Intellectual Property Office to trademark the phrases Sussex Royal and Sussex Royal Foundation for use on books, stationery, clothing such as pyjamas and socks, charity campaigns and the provision of training, sport and social care.

It is unclear if they will retain the Sussex Royal brand name and monogram of a crown above an entwined H&M.

Where will they live?

They now plan to divide their time between Britain and North America. They will continue to base themselves at Frogmore Cottage in the grounds of the Queen's Windsor Castle when in Britain. Harry

and Meghan, who lived in Canada while filming the TV show Suits, spent last six weeks of 2019 in Canada and their first official appearance of 2020 was a trip to Canada House in London, home of Canada's diplomatic mission to Britain.

Who will pay for their security?

It is also not clear who will pay for the couple's security, which could run into millions of pounds per year. Until now, the couple have received armed personal protection from London's police paid for by taxpayers. But they are no longer working royals, which may influence what publicly funded security they are entitled to.

of Queen's University Belfast, Ireland.

Jan 02: Taiwan's chief of the general staff, Gen Shen Yi-ming, died in an air force helicopter crash in mountainous terrain outside Taipei.

Jan 02: Turkey's parliament passed a bill approving a military deployment to Libya aimed at shoring up the UN-backed government in Tripoli.

Jan 02: The secretary general of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Abdul Latif al-Zayani, was appointed foreign minister of

of Iran's Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani.

Jan 05: Kane Tanaka extended her record as the world's oldest person by celebrating her 117th birthday.

Jan 05: A Bangladesh court ordered the arrest of former chief justice Surendra Kumar Sinha and 10 others on charges that they embezzled nearly half a million dollars.

Jan 05: Canterbury Kings batsman Leo Carter emulated the likes of Gary Sobers and Yuvraj Singh by smashing six sixes in an over, during a Super Smash Twenty20 match in

EXAM PACK

Christchurch.

Jan 06: Australia crushed New Zealand by 279 runs, and swept the three-Test series.

Jan 06: Countries bordering the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden formed a new group, the Council of Arab and African States bordering the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden and signed the Council's Charter.

Jan 07: The Iranian Parliament approved a bill designating the entire US military and Pentagon terrorist organisations.

Jan 07: Spain's parliament narrowly confirmed Socialist leader Pedro Sanchez as prime minister for another term.

Jan 07: The leader of Austria's conservatives Sebastian Kurz was sworn in as the world's youngest democratically-elected

leader.

Jan 07: Russian President Vladimir Putin met Syria's Bashar al-Assad during an unprecedented visit to Damascus.

Jan 07: Nasa said that its planet hunter satellite TESS had discovered an Earth-sized world within the habitable range of its star, which could allow the presence of liquid water. The planet, named "TOI 700 d", is relatively close to Earth—only 100 light years away.

Jan 08: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin inaugurated a new gas pipeline linking their countries.

Jan 08: Cambridge selected Sumbul Siddiqui, a Muslim woman who immigrated to the US from Pakistan as a child, to be mayor in an apparent first for Massachusetts.

Jan 08: Iran launched a massive missile strikes on US bases in Iraq.

Jan 08: A Ukrainian passenger plane crashed shortly after take-off from Tehran, killing all 176 people on board.

Jan 08: Peter Kirstein, a British computer scientist who was widely recognized as the father of the European internet, died. He was 86.

Jan 09: US President Donald Trump's administration announced sweeping changes to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to speed up the construction of highways, airports and pipelines.

About the law

Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), signed into law by Richard Nixon in 1970, all major infrastructure projects must be subject to environmental impact assessment by relevant agencies. NEPA was the US' first major environmental law and designed "to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony," and has proved an obstacle to

World's youngest democratically elected leaders

 SEBASTIAN KURZ AUSTRIA Chancellor Forms coalition government Jan 1	 SANNA MARIN FINLAND Prime Minister Oct 2019	 OLEKSIY GONCHARUK UKRAINE Prime Minister Aug 2019	 NAYIB BUKELE EL SALVADOR President June 2019
 JACINDA ARDERN NEW ZEALAND Prime Minister Oct 2017	 CARLOS ALVARADO COSTA RICA President May 2015	 LEO VARADKAR IRELAND Prime Minister June 2017	 JURI RATAS ESTONIA Prime Minister Nov 2016
 XAVIER ESPOT ZAMORA ANDORRA Head of government May 2019	 EMMANUEL MACRON FRANCE President May 2017	 JOSEPH MUSCAT MALTA Prime Minister Mar 2013	*Age when they came to power

GK Tidbits

1. A tune, voice or any such thing that sounds sweet and smooth is called: **Mellifluous**
2. The current President of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) is: **Jin Lique**
3. The AIIB is a multilateral development bank headquartered in: **Beijing**
4. Macau, a special administrative region of China, remained under Portuguese rule until: **20 December 1999**
5. To determine the size of known extrasolar planets, the European Space Agency (ESA), recently launched a space telescope named: **CHEOPS (CHAracterising EXOPlanets Satellite)**
6. The European Space Agency, an intergovernmental organisation of 22 member states, is headquartered in: **Paris, France**
7. Only cricketer from a Test playing nation to have played more than 100 ODIs but zero Tests is: **Keiron Pollard of West Indies**
8. The current Chairman of Planning and Development Board, Punjab is: **Hamed Yaqoob Sheikh**
9. The smallest ocean in the world is: **The Arctic**
10. The country known as the Land of White

Elephant is: **Thailand**

11. Wellington is the capital city of: **New Zealand**
12. The city of Turin is in: **Italy**
13. Hiragana, Katakana and Kanji are the names for writing systems used in: **Japan**
14. The archaeological site Gobekli Tepe is located in: **Turkey**
15. The country that has the most natural lakes is: **Canada**
16. Machu Picchu is located in: **Peru**
17. Machu Picchu is a 15th-century citadel belonging to: **Inca Civilization**
18. The country that has more than half of all the natural lakes in the world is: **Canada**
19. The Brandenburg Gate is the most famous landmark in: **Berlin**
20. Helmut Josef Michael Kohl served as Chancellor of Germany from: **1982 to 1998**
21. Ahmed Ali Park, better known as Kidney Hill Park, is located in: **Karachi**
22. The presidency of the Council of the European Union rotates among the EU member states every: **6 months**
23. The current European Union's presidency is

with: **Croatia**

24. Lockerbie bombing is the name given to bombing of: **Pan Am Flight 103**
25. The Lockerbie bombing took place on: **21 December 1988**
26. Exposing somebody or something to two difficult situations or opposing forces at the same time is called: **Whipsaw**
27. The first Pakistani to win a British Open title in squash was: **Hashim Khan**
28. Hashim Khan won his first British Open title in: **1951**
29. The telescope that was used to take the first-ever image of a black hole was: **The Event Horizon**
30. The world's youngest billionaire in 2019 was: **Kylie Jenner**
31. The 2019 Cricket World Cup was won by: **England**
32. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2019 was held in: **France**
33. Pakistan's legendary cricketer Javed Miandad has the lowest averages in Test cricket against: **Zimbabwe (28.60)**

EXAM PACK

the current administration's efforts to accelerate fossil fuel extraction. The Environment Protection Agency raised an objection to the Keystone XL pipeline, planned to bring oil from Canada to the US, during a NEPA review under the Obama administration, with the former president canceling the project as a result — only for it to be revived under Trump. The administration doesn't have the power to change the act of Congress, but, as it has previously done for the Endangered Species Act.

Jan 09: Britain's parliament finally approved Brexit, allowing it to become the first country to leave the European Union.

Jan 10: The US State Department approved the sale of up to 12 F-35 fighter jets and related equipment to Singapore at an estimated cost of US\$2.75 billion.

Jan 10: US lawmakers adopted a measure aimed at reining in President Donald Trump's ability to take military action against Islamic Republic of Iran.

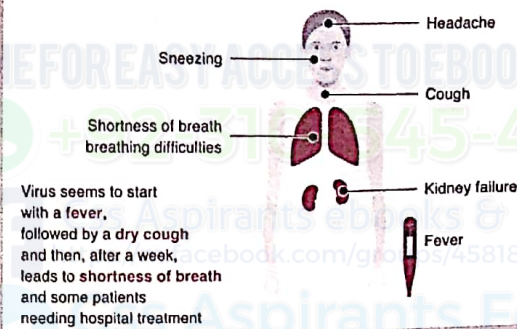
Jan 10: A British female news presenter, Samira Ahmed, who was paid one-sixth of the fee earned by a male presenter on a similar show, won her discrimination case against the BBC.

Jan 10: India's Supreme Court stated that the internet ban in Occupied Jammu and Kashmir without limiting it to a particular duration is not only a violation of the telecom rules, but also of freedom of speech and expression granted by the constitution.

Jan 10: India thrashed Sri Lanka in the third Twenty20 International to clinch the series 2-0.

Jan 10: Cricket legend Shane Warne's "baggy green" cap sold at an auction for more than Aus\$1 million (nearly \$700,000),

Symptoms of China coronavirus



with all funds going to help victims of bushfires in Australia.

Jan 11: The European Parliament declared that jailed Catalan separatist Oriol Junqueras is no longer an MEP, stripping him of the immunity his supporters hoped would see him freed.

Jan 11: China officially opened operations of the world's largest radio telescope, which it will use for space research and help in the hunt for extraterrestrial life.

The Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope, or FAST, is the size of 30 football fields and has been hewed out of a mountain in the southwestern province of Guizhou. It is also known by the name "Sky Eye" in China.

Jan 11: Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said, one of the Middle East's longest serving rulers who maintained the country's neutrality in regional struggles, died.

Jan 11: Haitham bin Tariq al-Said, a cousin of late Omani Sultan Qaboos bin Said, became his successor.

Jan 11: Governor Greg Abbott of Texas became the first governor in the United States to refuse to accept refugees under an executive order requiring local jurisdictions to actively opt in to the federal resettlement programme.

Jan 11: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen won a landslide election victory.

Jan 12: Portuguese motorbike rider Paulo Goncalves died after a crash in the Dakar Rally.

Jan 12: Karolina Pliskova defeated Madison Keys to win the Brisbane International.

Jan 13: West Indies defeated Ireland by five wickets to complete a 3-0 sweep of their ODI series.

GK Tidbits

34. The most-ever titles in women's tennis have been won by: **Martina Navratilova**

35. The Boxing Day Test starts on: **26 December**

36. The first man to break the world land and water speed records in the same year was: **Donald Campbell**

37. Pakistan won their first-ever hockey World Cup in: **1971**

38. Brian Hook is the US Special Representative for: **Iran**

39. The record for most number of no-balls in a Test match is: **103 (West Indies v Pakistan - 1977)**

40. BNA is the official news agency of: **Bahrain**

41. The team that has the record for lowest innings total in the Champions Trophy is: **USA (65 vs Australia in 2004)**

42. The number of bowlers who have taken a wicket on the very first ball of their T20I careers is: **14**

43. In Norse mythology, Thor is the god of thunder and rain and: **Farming**

44. In Norse mythology, Tyr is the god of: **War and strife**

45. Dragoon is a synonym of: **A soldier**

46. Francois Mitterrand, who died in 1996, at the age of 79, was the longest-serving president of: **France**

47. The Elysee Palace is the official residence of the President of: **France**

48. Javier Felipe Ricardo Pérez de Cuéllar de la Guerra served as the fifth Secretary-General of: **The UN**

49. The Sde Dov air base was an important airport located in: **Tel Aviv, Israel**

50. King Hussein bin Talal was the ruler of: **Lebanon**

51. Israeli-Jordanian peace talks were held in: **1994**

52. The first graduates from the Britain's Open University (OU) were awarded their degrees in: **1973**

53. The most Triple Crown events in snooker belong to: **Scotland's Stephen Hendry (18 titles)**

54. DVD stands for: **Digital Video Disc**

55. The country where the vehicle manufacturer Volvo was founded is: **Sweden**

56. The longest snake in the world is: **Python**

57. I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings is the autobiography of a famous writer: **Maya Angelou**

58. The number of bytes in a kilobyte is: **1024**

59. Taipei's largest skyscraper, formerly the world's tallest building, is named: **Taipei 101**

60. The famous book Oliver Twist was written by: **Charles Dickens**

61. The number of lines in a Shakespearean sonnet is: **14**

62. A hilly tourist attraction in DG Khan, which is often called the Murree of southern Punjab, is: **Fort Munro**

63. President Nixon ordered a halt to American bombing in North Vietnam in: **1973**

64. President Nixon's assistant for National Security Affairs was: **Dr Henry Kissinger**

65. Talks between the representatives from North and South Vietnam and the United States were held in: **Paris, France**

66. President Richard Nixon's special envoy to Saigon was: **General Alexander Haig**

67. The only grand slam title that American tennis

EXAM PACK

Jan 13: Lebanon paid outstanding dues it owed the international body after it lost voting privileges because it was behind on payments.

Jan 14: Scientists created what they claim were the first "living robots": entirely new life-forms created out of living

The Youngest Grammy Winners of All Time

Youngest grammy winners by age at the time of their win

The Peasall Sisters 2002	8, 11, 14 years
LeAnn Rimes 1997	14 years 182 days
Luis Miguel 1985	14 years 313 days
Lorde 2014	17 years 80 days
Billie Eilish 2020	18 years 39 days
Daya 2017	18 years 105 days
Monica 1999	18 years 123 days
Christina Aguilera 2000	19 years 67 days

cells.

Jan 14: David Warner and Aaron Finch put on the highest partnership for any wicket against India.

Jan 14: The southern Indian state of Kerala became the first to legally challenge the new citizenship law that has triggered nationwide demonstrations. In a petition to the Supreme Court, the state government said the law violates the secular nature of India's constitution, and accused the government of dividing the nation along communal lines.

Jan 14: Three EU countries—Britain, France and Germany—launched a process charging Iran with failing to observe the terms of the 2015 deal.

Jan 15: The US House of Representatives voted to send two formal charges against President Donald Trump to the Senate—abuse of power for asking Ukraine to investigate political rival Joe Biden and of obstruction of Congress for blocking testimony and documents sought by Democratic lawmakers.

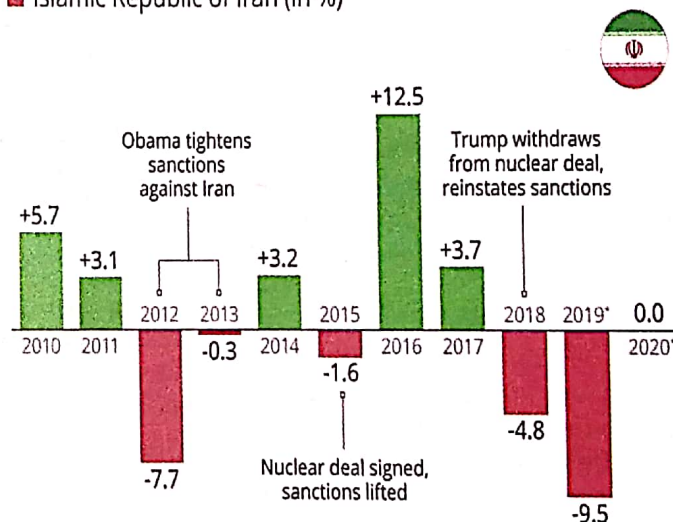
Jan 15: Russia's government, led by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev, resigned after President Vladimir Putin proposed a shake-up of the constitution.

Jan 15: Pope Francis named Francesca Di Giovanni, 66, as the first woman to hold a high-ranking post in the Secretariat of State.

Jan 15: Ben Stokes was named the International Cricket Council player of the year.

Iran's Economic Woes

Real GDP growth of the Islamic Republic of Iran (in %)



GK Tidbits

legend Pete Sampras could not win is: **French Open**

68. The last Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP) was: **Richard Olson**

69. SRAP team, which focused on Afghan reconciliation, was dissolved on: **Sept. 29, 2017**

70. SRAP was transformed into the position of: **US Special Representative for Afghanistan Reconciliation**

71. Bandar Seri Begawan is the largest city and the capital of: **Brunei Darussalam**

72. The Cape of Good Hope is a rocky headland on the Atlantic coast of the Cape Peninsula in: **South Africa**

73. The Sindhu Mahasagara or the Great Sea of the Sindhu was the name given by the Ancient Indians to: **The Indian Ocean**

74. Reuters is an international news agency based in: **London**

75. South Africa's highest military decoration for bravery is: **Golden Leopard**

76. The first mission of NASA in which a spacecraft

was reused was: **Space Shuttle**

77. Atmospheric pressure exerted on earth is due to the: **Gravitational pull**

78. Isobars are the lines connecting the places having same: **Pressure**

79. The most abundant element in the earth's crust is: **Oxygen**

80. The first person to measure earth's radius was: **Eratosthenes**

81. The position of a planet when it is nearest to the sun is called: **Perihelion**

82. The largest moon in our solar system is: **Ganymede**

83. The part of atmosphere in which commercial aircraft usually fly is: **Troposphere**

84. On 21st June, the sun is vertically overhead the Tropic of: **Cancer**

85. The major photochemical oxidant is: **Ozone**

86. A map-maker is called a: **Cartographer**

87. In animals, the principal role of Vitamin E is as an: **Antioxidant**

88. The vitamin produced in the sun's rays is: **Vitamin D**

89. The only American president who was elected unopposed is: **George Washington**

90. Ichthyology is a branch of zoology that deals with the study of: **Fish and other marine life**

91. Triskaidekaphobia is the fear of: **Number 13**

92. The Hubble Space Telescope is named after an American astronomer: **Edwin Powell Hubble**

93. The deepest known lake in the world is: **Lake Baikal**

94. Asia's longest river is: **Yangtze**

95. A person suffering from laryngitis temporarily loses: **Voice**

96. Tunku Abdul Rahman was the first elected prime minister of: **Malaysia**

97. "I have a dream," are the famous words of: **Martin Luther King**

98. In physics, light refers to: **Electromagnetic radiation**

99. The first complete sentence transmitted by telephone was: **"Watson, come here. I want to see you?"**

100. The Earth's core is believed to be a mix (alloy) of: **Iron and nickel**

MCQs / NATIONAL

1. On Dec 16, a European group the _____ uncovered a network of obscure NGOs and think tanks managed by an Indian network to influence the EU and the UN with content critical of Pakistan.
(a) Greensill (b) 'EU DisinfoLab'
(c) Deliveroo (d) Apparatchik
2. On Dec 16, King of _____ conferred upon Prime Minister Imran Khan his country's highest civil award 'The King Hamad Order of the Renaissance'.
(a) Qatar (b) Kuwait
(c) Bahrain (d) Brunei
3. On Dec 16, Dr Muhammad Khawar Jameel took oath as Federal _____ Ombudsman.
(a) Insurance (b) Tax
(c) Banking (d) None of these
4. On Dec 16, the Malaysian car manufacturer _____ delivered X70 to Pakistan government as per promise made by Dr Mahathir Mohamad to PM Imran Khan.
(a) Proton (b) Perodua
(c) Volvo (d) Inokom
5. On Dec 17, the three-member bench of the special court, headed by _____ High Court CJ Waqar Ahmad Seth, handed former President Gen (R) Pervez Musharraf death sentence under Article 6 of the Constitution.
(a) Islamabad (b) Peshawar
(c) Sindh (d) Lahore
6. On Dec 17, Pakistan was ranked _____ the third worst country in global rankings for gender equality, in Global Gender Gap Report 2020.
(a) 142 (b) 146
(c) 150 (d) 151
7. Air Marshal Zafar Chaudhry, who passed away on Dec 17, was the _____ chief of the Pakistan Air Force.
(a) Sixth (b) Eighth
(c) Tenth (d) Twelfth
8. Prime Minister Imran Khan addressed the Global Refugee Forum on _____.
(a) Dec 17 (b) Dec 18
(c) Dec 19 (d) Dec 20
9. On Dec 17, _____ of Pakistan was named in ICC Women's T20I squad for her outstanding performance for her country in ICC events.
(a) Nida Dar (b) Bisma Maroof
(c) Nain Abidi (d) Sana Mir
10. On Dec 19, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs appointed _____ the new Spokesperson of Foreign Office.
(a) Javid Jalil (b) Aisha Farooqui
(c) Summar Javed (d) Mehwish Sohail
11. On Dec 19, _____ Planning and Development Board and Unicef signed Technical Cooperation Agreement 2020.
(a) Sindh's (b) KP's
(c) Balochistan's (d) Punjab's
12. On _____, Bashir Maan, a veteran British-Pakistani politician and first Muslim elected as councillor in the UK, passed away.
(a) Dec 18 (b) Dec 20
(c) Dec 22 (d) Dec 24
13. Pakistan's current Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives is _____.
(a) Omar Ayub (b) Asad Umar
(c) Ghulam Sarwar (d) Shireen Mazari
14. On Dec 21, Pakistan's opening batsman Abid Ali became the _____ Pakistani to score centuries in each of his first two Tests.
(a) First (b) Second
(c) Third (d) Fourth
15. On Dec 21, Justice Gulzar Ahmed was sworn in to serve as the _____ chief justice of Pakistan.
(a) 24th (b) 25th
(c) 26th (d) 27th
16. On Dec 22, renowned writer and poet Amjad Islam Amjad received _____ prestigious Necip Fazil International Culture and Art Award.
(a) Lebanon's (b) Malaysia's
(c) Egypt's (d) Turkey's
17. On Dec 24, _____ was appointed Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on National Security Division and Strategic Policy Planning.
(a) Dr Moeed Pirzada
(b) Dr Moeed Yusuf
(c) Dr Attaur Rehman
(d) Dr Farrukh Saleem
18. On Dec 24, Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) appointed Farrukh Hussain Khan its _____.
(a) Chairman (b) COO
- (c) DG (d) CEO
19. The current Chairman Pakistan Red Crescent Society is _____.
(a) Dr Saeed Ilahi (b) Naguib Ullah
(c) Ibrar-ul-Haq (d) Mumtaz Haider
20. On Dec 31, Justice Mamoon Rashid Sheikh became chief justice of _____ High Court.
(a) Islamabad (b) Lahore
(c) Sindh (d) Peshawar
21. On Dec 31, _____ became the only bank to win the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) "Top Companies of the Year" Award for three consecutive years (2016-18).
(a) ABL (b) UBL
(c) HBL (d) Citibank
22. On Dec 31, the federal cabinet approved Shahid Salim Khan as regular Managing Director of _____ for three-year tenure.
(a) SNGPL (b) OGDCL
(c) SSGC (d) Nacta
23. On Jan 01, the federal government appointed _____ the Inspector General of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police.
(a) Naeem Khan (b) Salim Khan
(c) Ali Awais (d) Sanaullah Abbasi
24. The 23rd Pak-Iran Joint Border Commission meeting was held in _____.
(a) Quetta (b) Tehran
(c) Islamabad (d) Zahedan
25. On Jan 06, _____ provided Pakistan a sanction-free structure for the strategic North-South Gas Pipeline.
(a) Turkey (b) Russia
(c) China (d) Azerbaijan
26. On Jan 06, the sixth bilateral "Exercise Sea Guardians 2020" between the navies of Pakistan and _____ started.
(a) China (b) UAE
(c) Russia (d) Malaysia
27. On Jan 06, Pakistan's Mohammad Hamza Khan outclassed Yusuf Sheikh of _____ to win the British Junior Open Squash Championship U-15 title.
(a) Egypt (b) Pakistan
(c) England (d) Australia
28. Justice (Retd) Fakhruddin G. Ebrahim, who served as Chief Election

EXAM PACK

Commissioner, Sindh governor, law minister, attorney general and a Supreme Court judge, died on -----.

- (a) Jan 07 (b) Jan 08
(c) Jan 09 (d) Jan 10

29. On Jan 08, the government appointed ----- the director general of the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA).

- (a) Dr Fouzia Saeed (b) Tauqeer Nasir
(c) Nadeem Baig (d) Jamal Shah

30. On Jan 08, two new ministers—Iqbal Wazir and Malik Shah Mohammad—were inducted into provincial cabinet of -----.

- (a) Punjab (b) KP
(c) Sindh (d) Balochistan

31. On Jan 09, President Dr Arif Alvi conferred Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military) on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee ----- in recognition of his services for defence of the country.

- (a) Gen. Sarfraz Sattar
(b) Gen. Zubair Mahmood Hayat
(c) Gen. Nadeem Raza
(d) Gen. Omar Mahmood Hayat

32. On -----, Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated Pakistan's largest skills development programme 'Hunarmand Jawan'.

- (a) Jan 09 (b) Jan 08
(c) Jan 10 (d) Jan 11

33. On Jan 10, Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund won the prestigious Global Diversity and Inclusion Benchmarks Award (GDIB) for the ----- consecutive year.

- (a) Third (b) Fourth
(c) Fifth (d) Sixth

34. The National Assembly passed the Zainab Alert, Response and Recovery Bill, 2019 on -----.

- (a) Jan 07 (b) Jan 08
(c) Jan 09 (d) Jan 10

35. On Jan 10, Prime Minister Imran Khan inaugurated Azakhel Dry Port in ----- district of KP.

- (a) Nowshera (b) Charsadda
(c) Peshawar (d) Hazara

36. SP Abrar Hussain Nekokara, who killed himself in his office on Jan 13, was the principal of the Police Training School in -----.

- (a) Multan (b) Farooqabad
(c) Rawalpindi (d) Sihala

37. The National Assembly passed a bill allowing establishment of University of Islamabad on -----.

- (a) Jan 12 (b) Jan 13
(c) Jan 14 (d) Jan 15

38. On Jan 15, Pakistan batsman ----- was named in the ICC ODI Team of the Year for the second time in his career.

- (a) Shoaib Malik (b) Fakhar Zaman
(c) M. Hafeez (d) Babar Azam

39. The Indus Waters Treaty was signed in -----.

- (a) 1960 (b) 1962
(c) 1968 (d) 1973

40. Gomal University is in -----.

- (a) Quetta (b) DI Khan
(c) Zhob (d) Charsadda

INTERNATIONAL

1. On Dec 16, ----- filed a lawsuit at the WTO against the European Union, claiming that the bloc's restrictions on palm oil-based biofuel were unfair.

- (a) Malaysia (b) China
(c) Indonesia (d) Vietnam

2. On Dec 16, the ----- government's High Commissioner for Pensions, whose controversial pension reform plans have triggered nationwide strikes, resigned.

- (a) Danish (b) French
(c) Mexican (d) Vietnamese

3. Global Gender Gap Report 2020 has been released by ----- which is based in Geneva, Switzerland.

- (a) UN Watch (b) WEF
(c) OHCHR (d) WTO

4. On Dec 17, the two-day Global Refugee Forum started in -----.

- (a) Geneva (b) New York
(c) Paris (d) Atlanta

5. On Dec 17, South Korean President Moon Jae-in appointed Chung Sye-kyun his country's -----.

- (a) Minister for Commerce
(b) Prime Minister
(c) Minister for Foreign Affairs
(d) Minister for Energy

6. On Dec 17, ----- Ellyse Perry bagged the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe-Flint Award for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year.

- (a) New Zealand's (b) England's
(c) Australia's (d) South Africa's

7. On Dec 18, the European Parliament's Sakharov Prize was awarded to -----.

- (a) Lamiya Bashar (b) Oleg Sentsov
(c) Ilham Tohti (d) Raif Badawi

8. On Dec 18, Europe's CHEOPS planet-hunting space telescope moved into orbit to measure the density, composition and size of -----.

- (a) Exoplanets (b) Earth
(c) Mercury (d) Black Holes

9. On -----, the US House of Representatives passed two articles of impeachment against President Trump formally charging him with abuse of power and obstruction of Congress.

- (a) Dec 18 (b) Dec 19
(c) Dec 20 (d) Dec 21

10. On Dec 20, Beijing loyalist Ho Iat Seng was inaugurated as China's chief executive in -----.

- (a) Taiwan (b) Hong Kong
(c) Macau (d) None of these

11. On Dec 21, ----- Julio Cesar Martinez won the World Boxing Council flyweight title.

- (a) Canada's (b) Mexico's
(c) Columbia's (d) Cambodia's

12. On Dec 21, France's competition watchdog fined ----- €150 million (\$167m) for abusing its power over the treatment of advertisers.

- (a) Facebook (b) Twitter
(c) Google (d) MSN

13. On Dec 21, ----- created a full-fledged Space Force within its department of defence.

- (a) France (b) USA
(c) China (d) Russia

14. On Dec 21, the Kuala Lumpur Summit, to be known as the ----- Dialogue from next year, concluded.

- (a) Kuala Lumpur (b) Perdana
(c) Malaysia (d) Unity

15. On Dec 22, preliminary results of presidential election in Afghanistan, which was held on -----, were released.

- (a) Aug. 28 (b) Sept. 28
(c) Oct. 14 (d) Oct. 28

16. On Dec 23, a secondary circuit for Iran's Arak heavy water reactor, also known as _____, became operational as part of its redesign under the 2015 nuclear deal.
(a) IR-40 (b) Oghab 2
(c) Iranium (d) Stuxnet
17. On Dec 23, _____ powerful military chief, Gen Ahmed Gaid Salah, died at the age of 79.
(a) Algeria's (b) Tunisia's
(c) Sudan's (d) Libya's
18. On Dec 24, Travis Kalanick, a co-founder of _____, announced his exit from the company's board of directors.
(a) Google (b) Uber
(c) WhatsApp (d) InDriver
19. On Dec 26, _____ Constitutional Court ruled that a more than two-year block on access to online encyclopaedia Wikipedia in the country was a violation of freedom of expression.
(a) Canada's (b) Turkey's
(c) Russia's (d) China's
20. On Dec 27, _____ became the first country to put into combat service intercontinental ballistic missiles armed with hypersonic weapons.
(a) Russia (b) China
(c) France (d) USA
21. On Dec 27, _____, China and Russia began joint naval drills in the Indian Ocean and Gulf of Oman.
(a) Pakistan (b) Indonesia
(c) Iran (d) Turkey
22. On Dec 30, _____ was appointed India's first Chief of Defence Staff.
(a) Gen. Mukund Naravane
(b) Gen. Dalbir Singh
(c) Gen Bipin Rawat
(d) Admiral Karambir Singh
23. On Dec 31, _____ shut down its Philippsburg Nuclear Power Plant, one of its seven remaining nuclear power plants as part of a planned phase-out of atomic energy production by the end of 2022.
(a) Great Britain (b) Germany
(c) Canada (d) France
24. On Jan 01, _____ Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan was named the Arab world's most influential leader of 2019.
(a) Dubai's (b) Sharjah's
(c) Abu Dhabi's (d) Qatar's
25. On Jan 02, _____ chief of the general staff, Gen Shen Yi-ming, died in an air force helicopter crash.
(a) Taiwan's (b) Thailand's
(c) Philippines' (d) Myanmar's
26. On Jan 02, _____ parliament passed a bill approving a military deployment to Libya aimed at shoring up a UN-backed government there.
(a) France's (b) Turkey's
(c) Russia's (d) Egypt's
27. Maj. Gen. Qassem Soleimani, an Iranian general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and commander of its Quds Force, was assassinated in Baghdad on _____.
(a) Jan 01 (b) Jan 02
(c) Jan 03 (d) Jan 04
28. On Jan 04, China appointed Luo Huining the director of its liaison office which represents the central government in semi-autonomous _____.
(a) Hong Kong (b) Macau
(c) Taiwan (d) None of these
29. On Jan 05, _____ parliament called on US and other foreign troops to leave the country.
(a) Lebanon's (b) Kuwait's
(c) Iraq's (d) Syria's
30. Currently, the world's oldest living person is _____.
(a) Kane Tanaka (b) Misao Okawa
(c) Lucile Randon (d) Jeanne Bot
31. Justice Surendra Kumar Sinha is a former Chief Justice of _____.
(a) Bangladesh (b) India
(c) Bhutan (d) Myanmar
32. The 7-member Council of Arab and African States bordering the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden comprises Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Djibouti, Sudan, Somalia, Egypt and _____.
(a) Qatar (b) UAE
(c) Yemen (d) Turkey
33. On Jan 07, the _____ Parliament approved a bill designating the entire US military and Pentagon terrorist organisations.
(a) Lebanese (b) Iranian
(c) Syrian (d) Iraqi
34. Pedro Sanchez is the prime minister of _____.
(a) Luxembourg (b) Spain
(c) Argentina (d) Sweden
35. On Jan 07, Sebastian Kurz was sworn in as the Chancellor of _____ becoming the world's youngest democratically-elected leader.
(a) Hungary (b) Switzerland
(c) Austria (d) Germany
36. On Jan 08, Cambridge selected Sumbul Siddiqui, a Muslim woman who immigrated to the United States from _____ as a child, to be mayor in an apparent first for Massachusetts.
(a) Bangladesh (b) Pakistan
(c) India (d) Afghanistan
37. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of the United States was signed into law by President Richard Nixon in _____.
(a) 1965 (b) 1968
(c) 1970 (d) 1974
38. On _____, Britain's parliament finally approved Brexit, allowing it to become the first country to leave the European Union.
(a) Jan 07 (b) Jan 08
(c) Jan 09 (d) Jan 10
39. On _____, Oman's Sultan Qaboos bin Said, one of the Middle East's longest serving rulers who maintained the country's neutrality in regional struggles, died.
(a) Jan 08 (b) Jan 09
(c) Jan 10 (d) Jan 11
40. On Jan 14, David Warner and Aaron Finch of _____ put on the highest partnership for any wicket against India.
(a) Australia (b) West Indies
(c) New Zealand (d) England



J

ahangir's World Times (JWT): First of all, please tell us about your educational background?

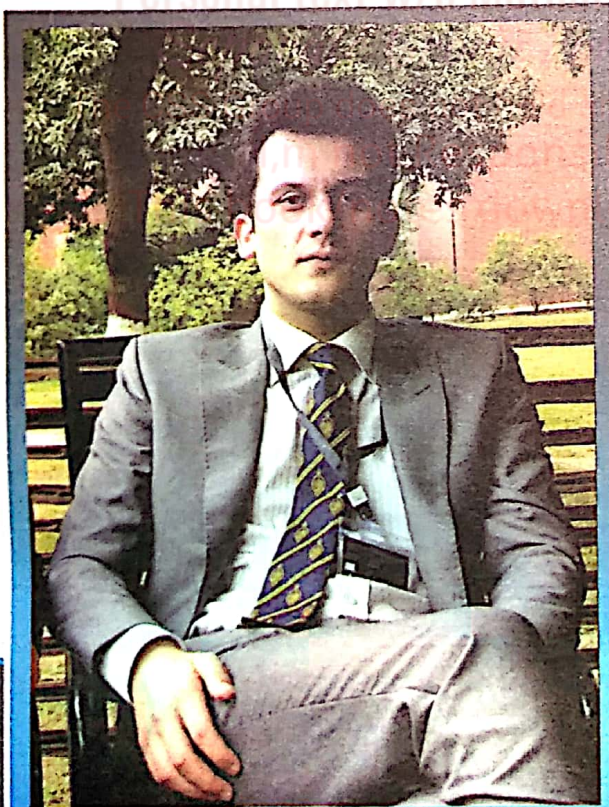
Abdullah Khan (AK): I got my initial education at Pakistan International Public School & College (PIPS), Abbottabad. Later, I earned a bachelor's degree in Computer Science from Air University, Islamabad.

JWT: Since you have been allocated to Pakistan Administrative Service (PAS), what was the feature of this service that attracted you most?

AK: PAS is one of the most powerful groups as it gives immense power and prestige to its members. However, I strongly believe in the maxim that power is conferred upon an individual to carry out the burden of responsibilities which are allied with a task or job. PAS is a group that gives an individual an opportunity to work both in the field solving the problems of the common man and also in the capacity of policymaker which influences the lives of the general public for good.

JWT: What, in your opinion, is the key to making a difference in written part of CSS exam?

AK: Acing the written part of CSS exam is a skill, and every person has a different approach towards it. There is no 'one size fits all' solution to it and everyone has to devise a strategy which suits his/her temperament, prior knowledge and commitment.



Detailed Marks Sheet

Subject	Marks
Compulsory Subjects	
Essay	72
Précis & Composition	57
GSA	48
Current Affairs	65
Pakistan Affairs	30
Islamiat	60
Optional Subjects	
International Relations	146
European History	73
Gender Studies	52
International Law	52
Sociology	72
Total Written	727
Viva Voce	155
Grand Total	882

Some of the things that helped me were:

1. Keeping calm and treating CSS exam as an exam like the ones that one keeps on taking during one's academic career.
2. Reading relevant, credible and good material so as to understand, and reproduce thereupon, the best knowledge.
3. Doing a lot of written practice as it gives one the confidence required in the CSS exam.
4. Taking mock exams is of paramount importance to nullify the anxiety that overpowers an individual in the CSS exam and leads towards failure.
5. Making notes at the appropriate time and updating them.
7. Learning how an argument is built from scratch.

JWT: Generally, compulsory subjects are considered low-scoring, what was your strategy to get through these very papers?

AK: I followed a 5-point strategy which was:

1. Writing and practicing English essays on a regular basis.
2. Getting essays evaluated and working on mistakes identified.
3. Preparing for all the components of Précis and Composition paper rather than just précis.
4. Studying Islamiat from different, original sources.
5. Preparing current affairs from multiple papers and international journals.

JWT: What was the key to your phenomenal success?

AK: In brief, it was:

- a) Prayers of my parents, teachers and friends.
- b) Not considering CSS exam the end of the world.
- c) Identifying the subject which was my strength and preparing for it the most.
- d) Lots and lots of written practice.
- e) Relying on original sources and expanding the scope of my knowledge.

JWT: How answers should be written to get maximum marks?

AK: Answers should be properly structured with an introduction, body and conclusion. Introduction should be catchy and must attract the eye of the examiner; it should not give away the main arguments but rather only

In Conversation with
Abdullah Khan (PAS)

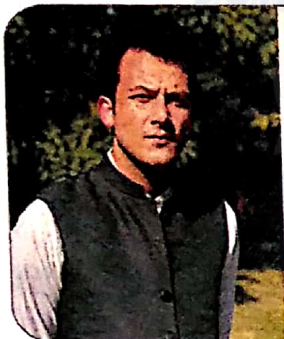
13th in Pakistan, CSS 2018-19

“If it's your first attempt prepare like it's your last and there are none left.”

a hint of them. Headings must be included so as to facilitate the examiner. Arguments must be logical, relevant, coherent and non-clichéd; they must not give the impression that you consulted substandard material during preparation. Arguments should also be strengthened by giving and nullifying their counter arguments. Sound reasoning skills must be applied to the body so the

without any preparation.

4. Formulate a mental plan to divide time till the commencement of CSS exam.
5. Start slow, and gradually gain pace.
6. Find some mentors; they can be really helpful in the start.
7. If it's your first attempt prepare like it's your last and



My Interview Experience

Before entering the interview room, I was a bit nervous. However, as soon as I entered the room, the panellists greeted me warmly and made me feel comfortable. Mr Chairman asked me questions on European History and issues of Pakistan in order of importance. I knew most of the answers and the ones I didn't, I respectfully and humbly acknowledged my lack of knowledge. Other panellists also asked me questions about my hometown, Pakistan and my optional subjects. One highlight of my interview was when one member asked me 'Why is Europe called Europe?' This question confused me a little but I answered 'Sir, that is a very interesting question but I have never seemed to think about it. I'll definitely look into it.' The member burst into laughter at this and other members joined him too. Mr Chairman said at the end, 'Even I did not know why Europe is called Europe. I will look into it and so should you.' Overall, it was a very good experience.

arguments are strong. Conclusion must be treated as conclusion, not just as the summary of the answer. It must not give the impression that something else could have been added.

JWT: Should there be some word limit kept in mind while writing answers?

AK: There is no strict word limit but equal time must be given to all subjects. Written practice would make you aware how much you can write on one question in the allotted time.

JWT: How did you structure your Essay and what was your strategy for Précis and Composition Paper?

AK: I wrote a thesis statement at the start which had three components, i.e. stance, direction and broader implication. I derived outline from the thesis statement, not from the topic of the essay. Outline was in the form of arguments, not pointers. Every point of the outline was an individual argument and one flowed from another. I wrote a catchy introduction which introduced the thesis statement in an effective way.

Précis and Composition paper is important regarding all its aspects. Synonyms and antonyms must be considered as important as précis itself. All components must be given equal weight if you want to secure good marks.

JWT: How a new aspirant should start his/her preparations and what areas should (s)he focus?

AK: In my opinion, a new aspirant should:

1. Start with getting some general and background knowledge;
2. Assess his/her strengths and weaknesses in terms of subjects.
3. Identify his/her strongest and weakest subject

there are none left.

My tips on:

Selection of optional subjects

Choose only those subjects you feel you have interest in. In this way, you will never be bored while preparing for them for long periods of time.

Notes-making

Your notes must:

1. Be very precise;
2. Include quotations and other relevant information at the top of the paper (In this way you will remember them); and
3. be updated regularly;

Revision

Revision should be done on a regular basis. From January onwards, all the time must be dedicated to revision. ■

Rapid Fire	
Your inspiration	An inner voice which strived for a meaningful life
Attempts	01
Qualification	BSCS (hons.)
Alma mater	Air University, Islamabad
Schooling medium	English
Your study schedule	5-8 hours a day
Your sources	Recommended books, research papers, internet sources, credible journals, general books on history and politics, magazines
Group preferences	1. PAS 2. PSP 3. FSP
Why PAS?	Diverse nature of job with horizontal mobility and a chance to interact with and solve the problems of public at large.
Hobbies	Playing Chess, reading, watching movies
Fave personality	Otto von Bismarck
Fave book(s)	Zinda Rood by Justice (retd.) Javed Iqbal
Fave quote	"Laws are like sausages—it is best not to see them being made." —Bismarck
Secret of your success	Divine providence, use of credible, diverse resources and a lot of written practice
Role model	Lee Kuan Yew

INTERVIEW

JWT Editorial Board

Jahangir's World Times (JWT): First of all, please tell us about your educational background?

Azka Sahar (AS): I hail from Sialkot. I got my basic education from my hometown. Then, I moved to Lahore to pursue my dreams. I am a law graduate from Punjab University Law College. Currently, I am doing LLM thesis from the same institution.

JWT: How much helpful did you find Jahangir's World Times (JWT) in your preparation for PMS exam?

AS: World Times has been very helpful for me in a way that it provided me the guideline to do focused study, especially with their printed materials like JWT, for securing maximum marks in exams. It proved to be very instrumental for the preparation of current national and international affairs.

JWT: What, in your opinion, is the key to getting through compulsory papers of PMS exam, especially that of General Knowledge?

AS: For compulsory subjects, it is essential to go through the basic knowledge of every subject. By doing so, a student will be able to delve further into the subject. Always use relevant facts and figures to substantiate your arguments.

As GK is not a matter of rote learning, you need to be well versed with daily current affairs and basic knowledge of recommended areas. Reading newspaper regularly helps a lot in this regard.

My advice for fresh aspirants

I would advise the fresh aspirants to be:

1. sincere to yourself;
2. consistent in what you do;
3. stay disciplined; and
4. be dedicated to your goal

JWT: How answers should be written to get maximum marks in the written part of PMS exam?

AS: In order to secure maximum marks in PMS exam, it is highly advisable to give appropriate arguments. To answer

effectively, the most important thing is to understand what exactly is being asked, and then writing your answers accordingly in a precise yet elaborate manner. Do also strengthen your arguments with relevant quotes, facts and figures.

JWT: How did you structure your Essay?

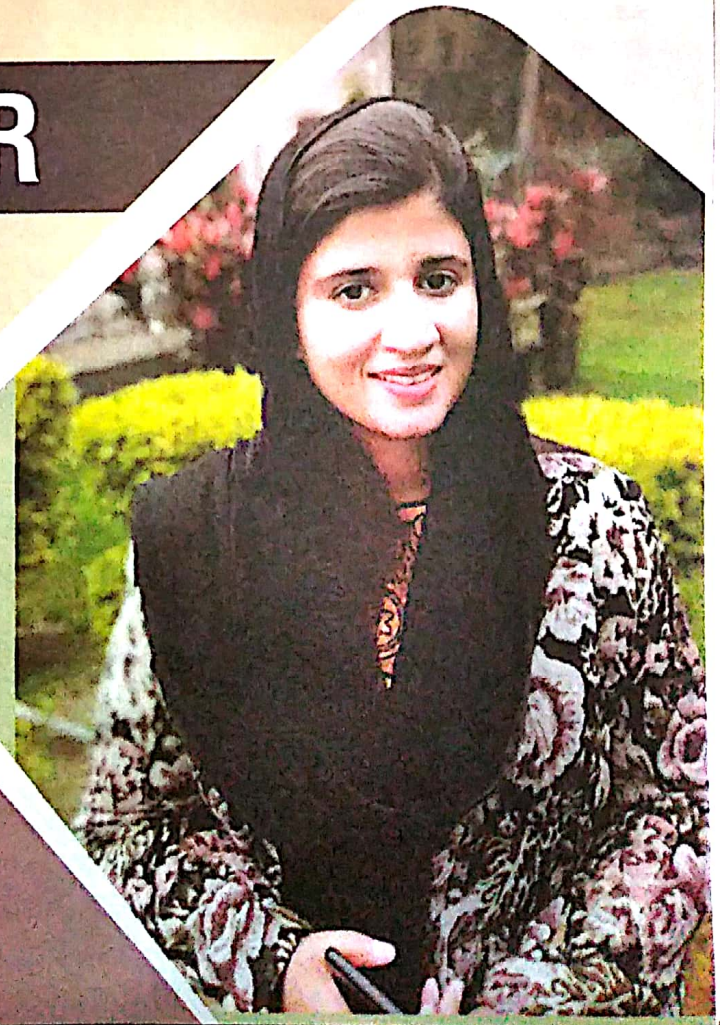
AS: Relevance is the key to effective essay writing. The

In Conversation with

AZKA SAHAR

**1st in Punjab
PMS-2019-20**

“JWT proved to be very instrumental for the preparation of current national and international affairs.”



INTERVIEW

best way to attempt an essay in an effective way is to write it in simple, logical, coherent and precise way. First of all, I chose a simple topic and identified its important variables. Then I made an outline on two pages in sentence form. Introduction was simple with a brief overview of the topic and it ended with thesis statement. I focussed on coherence, clarity and relevance all along. In the end, I proofread my essay to rectify if there were any mistakes.

JWT: What was your strategy for the General Knowledge paper?

AS: I was confident with my GK preparation which I had been doing for quite a few months and had all the major aspects of GK mastered as much as I could. I went through several past papers conducted by FPSC and PPSC. I consulted a number of online resources as well.

JWT: Should there be some word limit kept in mind while writing answers?

AS: It depends upon the nature of the question asked. The answer should be lengthy enough to convey your ideas to the examiner effectively; but, at the same time, it must not be unnecessarily long and filled with material that is irrelevant. Average length of a good answer may comprise 5-6 sheets.

JWT: Is it better to attempt optional papers in Urdu or one should go with English only?

AS: I would recommend aspirants to attempt optional papers in English only if they are confident enough to do it effectively. However, if you feel you have better skills of writing in Urdu, better go for that.

JWT: How one should choose Optional Subjects?

AS: The recent educational background of a candidate matters a

My Interview Experience

My interview experience was really good. The overall environment was pleasant. I was asked some opinion-based questions. The panellists also inquired about my law degree and optional subjects for PMS examination. There were a few questions which I could not answer. Instead of answering them wrong, I preferred to let them go with a sorry. On the other hand, I answered the questions I knew the answers of to the best of my capabilities.



lot in this regard. While choosing optional subjects, do keep your aptitude in mind. Besides, take into consideration the recent securing trends of the subjects you want to opt for.

JWT: Who deserves the credit for your success?

AS: The credit for my success goes to a few persons; at the top of home will be my parents. After them, my brothers, my teachers and my friends were always there as a source of strength.

JWT: As interviewers usually grill interview candidates, how did you manage the situation?

AS: Grilling, to me is a strong word to which I do not agree. The interviewers were very kind and supportive along with being professional as they had a duty towards their profession to choose the right candidates. I did not feel any unnecessary strictness or grilling attitude of the panel but rather they were providing a comfortable environment. As far as managing the situation is concerned, my confidence was the key to that. ■

Rapid Fire

Your inspiration	My brother, Kashif
Attempts	02
Schooling medium	English
Your qualification	LLM
Alma mater(s)	University of the Punjab
Your study schedule	4-5 hours a day
Your sources	Recommended books, newspapers, magazines, internet, YouTube
Your strength	Strong visual memory and ability to reproduce on paper
Hobbies & activities	Book reading especially fiction, Cooking
Fave personality	Angela Merkel
Fave book	"The First Muslim, The Story of Muhammad" by Lesley Hazleton
Fave quote	"Be Courteous to all but intimate with few and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence." — George Washington
Secret of your success	Consistency and trust in my capabilities
Your role model	My Mother